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## "Forbidden."

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"LED ON," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER XXV.

#### A DOUBLE VICTORY.

THE dinner party passed off, as a widow once remarked, with a cheerful smirk, of her husband's funeral, "without a hitch." Beatrice put on her wedding finery to please her father, but as it was more than six months since she was married, she toned down its hymeneal appearance by wearing a host of Neapolitan violets. The Bishop's heart swelled with paternal pride as he looked first at her bright, bewitching face, and then at the perfections of her toilet. There was everything to please his fastidious taste, and as he stooped to kiss her, moved by an irresistible impulse, he would have given almost anything to be able to call her still Beatrice Kennard.

Flora Vivian looked charming in the sweetest of pink frocks. She said she would feel "quite out of it," as none of her particular friends were there, but nevertheless contrived to get more than a fair share of enjoyment from the evening.

The county magnates were voted dull; too much occupied with their own importance to care much about the world outside their small circle. Beatrice felt non-plussed by their abnormal heaviness; but finding it impossible to rouse them into ordinary liveliness, devoted herself of malice aforethought to the Archdeacon, because she meant to win him over to her side in defiance of his wife. Mrs. Winthrop came in looking as stiff as if she were encased in steel armour instead of black broché; and she had schooled her husband to put aside for once his usual urbanity. He felt in consequence

thoroughly uncomfortable between conflicting duties, as he took his place at the dinner table beside the too charming Lady Falconer.

Stiffness and dignity melted away when he met the glance of her mischief-loving eyes, but when he found that he was thawing too fast, he made such a sudden attempt at refrigeration, that Beatrice, who saw through him completely, could scarcely keep her countenance. She had the power of interesting herself in the most widely different subjects, which was very useful to her in a mixed party. She talked to a neighbouring squire about the destruction of young partridges by foxes, with just as much apparent sympathy as that with which she discussed the destructive tendencies of the "Parish Councils Bill" with her ecclesiastical neighbour on the other side. It was no effort to her to make herself agreeable to either of them, because they showed an active and honest interest in their own hobbies. If she had discovered that they were only airing them to make conversation for her benefit, she would not have taken the trouble to pursue either topic, but it was a real nuisance for the squire that the precious animal he depended on for one kind of sport should interfere with the birds he required for the other; and there was no mistake about the genuine indignation of the Archdeacon at a measure which he considered, rightly or wrongly, as a blow against the power of the Church. To the Venerable William Winthrop it was a delightful surprise to find that a girl—fascinating and fashionable—could take a deeper interest, and show a wider knowledge of a thorny ecclesiastical subject than the wife of his bosom. He forgot Mrs. Winthrop's urgent injunctions, or rather he put them aside as evidently unreasonable. He regarded Lady Falconer as a most exceptional young woman, and gave himself away (to use a slang expression) like an enthusiastic schoolboy.

Beatrice's eyes were sparkling with triumph when the ladies gathered round the fire in the drawing-room. "I have managed the Archdeacon," she whispered in Flo's ear, as she administered a pinch to her arm, under Mrs. Winthrop's haughty nose.

"He's only a man," contemptuously, "try the wife."

And Beatrice did. She found it up-hill work, for Mrs. Winthrop stood steadily on the defensive, determined not to be seduced from her allegiance to her own prejudices by the wiles of the arch-offender. All her efforts therefore would probably have been in vain but for the chance discovery that the Archdeacon's wife was bitten with the

mania for providing knitted garments for dusky tribes, who would much rather be without them. Here Beatrice saw her opportunity, and pounced upon it. She happened to know a new stitch, which had been taught her by Mrs. Abingdon in return for her promise to hold a stall at the Westminster Sale of Work. The Sale came off on one of the few days that the Falconers happened to spend in London during October, and Beatrice was splendidly successful. Mrs. Abingdon's gratitude was proportionate, and in the overflow of this beautiful sentiment, she offered to teach Lady Falconer a new stitch. This stitch formed the basis for a treaty of peace with Mrs. Winthrop. She was at the end of her ideas as to knitted trifles in the way of jackets, caps, and those odd garments which have the still odder title of "hug-me-tights," so that a decided novelty in the way of a stitch, was a boon that she caught at with both hands. She forgot Lady Malvern's eccentricities, Lady Falconer's culpable laxity concerning them faded from her mind, for she could only remember that the latter was engaged to come to tea the next day, in order to teach her a stitch which would make all the knitting inhabitants of St. Christopher's green with envy.

The two girls laughed over the double victory; but their laughter soon died away as they thought of their approaching separation. Beatrice had enjoyed the peace and happiness of her father's house to the full. And she looked forward to the unrest and possible unhappiness of Clifford House, Curzon Street, with an ominous presentiment. She had tried to forgive and forget, but she could not shut her eyes to the fear that her husband was deteriorating so fast that she would soon be left stranded on a lonely level far above him.

He had slipped away without a good-bye. How would he greet her when they said "How d'ye do?"

Scores of essays and poems have been written on the subject of good-bye, sometimes only an ordinary semi-colon—at others a tragic full stop; but nobody has thought it worth while to discuss "How d'ye do," and yet the whole after-happiness may depend on the first greeting—which may be either a chill, or a stimulus.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## ON THE DEFENSIVE.

THERE was no one to welcome Lady Falconer, except the servants, when she arrived in Curzon Street, but she gave a glance of approval at her pretty den, where there was a cheerful fire smiling in her face and the tea waiting on its silver tray.

"His lordship had not come home, but he was expected in the course of the day," she was informed by Simmons, the butler.

Few people knew that she was in town, or probably some visitors would have dropped in, and she sat there slowly drinking her tea in a state of restless expectation and perfect solitude. She felt as if she could settle to nothing till the first meeting with her husband was over. So much depended on the mood in which he happened to be at the moment. If he were remorseful she would meet him half-way. She thought about it till her uncertainty worried her so intensely that she determined to think about it no more. Tired of inaction, she moved about the room, inspecting a palm which began to look unhealthy, re-arranging some of the smaller pieces of furniture and the lace draperies of the mantelshelf, altering the position of a pot of white chrysanthemums, and finally sitting down to the piano and letting her fingers run over the keys. She hated work, so this was no time for taking up her knitting. She was fond of reading, but the cleverest book in the world could be no good to her whilst her mind was engrossed by other things, so that music was her only resource. Into music she could throw all her hopes and fears, her doubts and dreads, and perhaps it would give her back the composure which was slipping from her as the hands of the Dresden china clock went slowly round the dial. She played until her nerves were completely soothed and her heart melted into tenderness. Passionate rebellion softened into gentle resignation, and her thoughts went back to the days when all her hopes and all her aspirations began and ended in Herbert Clifford, Earl of Falconer. The shaded light of many lamps fell softly on the golden draperies, the dainty china, the exquisitely modelled statuettes, graceful palms, and tall chrysanthemums. A bowl of violets scented the room with their refreshing sweetness, whilst the mellow notes of one of Bach's finest symphonies seemed like a message from a better world than



this. Beatrice played on, and her large eyes grew dreamy and tender, whilst the red lips which had closed themselves so resolutely opened into the shadow of a smile. After all there were infinitely pleasant possibilities in life, and the blank canvas of the future need not be daubed with a blacking brush.

The door opened, and Falconer came in with a cigar in his mouth, his tall figure looming large and distinct against the folds of the golden-plush portière. At the first glance Beatrice's heart sank deplorably and all her hopes withered. Ending the symphony abruptly and leaving the piano, she advanced towards the fireplace. He had none of the spick and span look of the man about town. His black hair was so long that it fell over his forehead, and his whole appearance was that of one who has not thought about it. The cigar, which he had now transferred from his lips to his hand, showed a disregard for his wife's prohibition against anything stronger than a cigarette being smoked in her boudoir; and although they had not seen each other for more than a fortnight, his sombre eyes met hers without any look of loving recognition. The counsels of his choice friends were still ringing in his ears, and as he looked at his wife he remembered that he was not to "knock under to her," but to "put his foot down" from the first and show that he was master in his own house. Therefore, though he was keenly sensible of her power of attraction, as she stood with one arm leaning on the mantel-shelf and her beautiful face turned towards his, his first words were: "I had forgotten that you were coming back to-day, and I've asked some friends to dine with me."

"So have I," she said, quietly, "Sir Digby and Millie Crosby. Who are yours?"

"Oh, a different lot altogether," with an uneasy laugh, as he was influenced against his will by the refinement of his surroundings. It had seemed such an easy thing down at the Grange to invite Harry Lester, Dick Winter, and the Sartorises, and force his wife to meet them, especially when the two former were edging him on to show his independence; but here—in Mayfair, with Beatrice before him with that atmosphere of grace and refinement about her which was as natural to her as the air she breathed—the audacity of such a proposal became evident to him.

"Who are they?" she asked, gravely. "If they are fit for me to meet I suppose they will do for the Crosbys? Why don't you

sit down ? or do you think it too much trouble to waste five minutes on your wife ? ”

“ I ’ m just off,” he said, hurriedly, but at the same moment came forward a few steps and leant over the back of a chair. “ It ’ s rather awkward, you know. The flighty Millie, anything suits her, but that husband of hers is a particular sort of fellow.”

“ Is Sir Digby likely to be more particular that I am ? ” she asked, with an indignant flash in her eyes, though her voice was quiet as usual.

He did not look in her face, but studied his extinct cigar with interest. “ You are my wife, you see,” he said, sullenly, “ and you have to put up with my friends as I do with yours.”

“ No, I needn ’ t put up with your friends, you can enjoy them separately,” she explained, with celerity. “ Who are coming to-night ? ”

“ Nobody to make a fuss about,” trying to carry off the situation carelessly. “ Lester and his wife—she ’ s a nice little woman, quiet as a mouse—and Dick Winter, and Nina Sartoris, just to console her for not coming to the Grange.”

Beatrice took her arm from the mantel-shelf and turned to face him, as she drew a deep breath. “ You have asked that woman to my house ? ” she inquired in a low voice, whilst her delicate nostrils quivered like a thoroughbred ’ s.

“ I have asked her to mine,” he answered, doggedly ; “ and she is going to dine here to-night.”

“ And you expect me to receive her ? ” she asked, breathlessly.

“ As to that you can do as you like,” and he shrugged his shoulders in a way that was not habitual to him. “ I don ’ t think your presence is necessary to her happiness. In fact you will have a chilling effect on the whole company, if you put on that confoundedly stand-offish manner of yours,” he added, roughly.

She thought of her father with his chivalrous courtesy to all women, if he could hear how this son-in-law of his addressed his wife ! She thought of Hugh Pemberton, of Aunt Judy, of all those who loved her, and her heart nearly burst with rage and humiliation. But the horror of that scene at Ethelred Hall came vividly upon her in a wave of remembrance, and she forced herself to control her own temper lest he should lose all constraint over his.

"Don't be afraid, I shall not be there," she said, as coldly as she could.

"Going to sulk up here, with the Crosbys to keep you company?" he asked, with a sneer, relieved to think that she would not be in the dining-room to chill the expected hilarity, but at the same time uncertain as to whether he ought not to insist upon her presence to save his own dignity.

"Wherever I dine, they will dine with me," she answered, with confidence, as a bold plan developed itself in her alert brain.

"Awfully jolly for Crosby, if it weren't for his wife, you can send her down to us if you like," as he sauntered to the door.

"I don't mean to insult my friends as you insult me," she said, proudly. She only waited till the door was shut behind him, and then she hastened to the writing-table and hurriedly dashed off two notes. This done she rang the bell for Simmons, who was always ready to help her in all emergencies. One note was to ask the Crosbys to dine with her at the Savoy, as her husband had unfortunately made another engagement; and the other to Captain Pemberton, to entreat him to meet her at the door of the restaurant precisely at eight o'clock, and also to take a box or four stalls at the Gaiety if he could manage it, and if not, at any other of the theatres that the Crosbys were likely to prefer. Simmons engaged that the notes should be sent off at once, and offered to go himself to the Savoy to secure a table and order a suitable dinner. He understood the situation completely, though not a word was said to enlighten him, and his manner was full of reserved sympathy, which Beatrice appreciated, though she seemed not to notice it.

Resolutions of patient endurance as well as resuscitated tenderness were blown to the four winds. If her husband meant it to be war, there should be no surrender on her side. She would fight him inch by inch, not with the same weapons, thank God, but with the justifiable arms of self-respect and firm determination. She was possessed with a burning indignation which flashed from her eyes and quivered in her clenched hands. Her combative instincts, so long dormant, were brought into full play. She was ready for a struggle, ready to fight for her rights, and in defence of her honour and her home. As she paced up and down the boudoir there was no fear, and no sorrow in her heart. Misery was waiting for her round the corner, but at present rage, and rage alone, blocked the

road. That woman was to come into her house, to sit, most probably, at the head of the table in her own seat, to use the knives, forks and plates with the Clifford crest upon them, to smirk at her husband, whilst her heart swelled with abominable pride to think she had turned the mistress of the house out of her place—either in her home or in her husband's heart. Out of the house she must go before that woman entered it, and she could not come back until she had left it. She ordered the carriage at half-past seven, and went up to dress in very good time.

Warren wondered what had happened, for she could see that her mistress was in a state of wild, but suppressed excitement. Her hands shook so that she let her rings fall as she tried to gather them up; and though she was looking splendidly handsome, and Warren had dressed her hair in a most ravishing style, she seemed to be too absorbed with her thoughts to take any pride or pleasure in her own appearance. She was dressed in black of the daintiest description, with only a few diamonds here and there to lighten it. Her maid, as she threw the white wrap, with its high sable collar, over her shoulders, hoped that "my lady would enjoy herself." Beatrice's lip curled as she heard the wish, and she walked out of the room with the step and the glance of a Judith going forth to avenge her country's wrongs.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### A DINNER AT THE SAVOY.

IF only Hugh would be there! That was the one thought that forced itself to the front, as she made the long round which it was necessary to take to fill up the time, on her way to the Savoy. She was perfectly ignorant as to his movements; he might be at Aldershot or at the other end of England, but she was certain of this, that if he were anywhere within call, he would throw up any engagement rather than let her go alone and unattended to a public restaurant. If he were in London, she was sure of him, but if he were with his regiment down at Aldershot—and if the Crosbys failed her as well—what was to become of her? She could not dine alone in that large well-lighted room, to be afraid of every opening of the doors lest it should proclaim the entrance of friend or

acquaintance. And yet it was equally impossible to go home. What was to become of a lonely girl in the very heart of the crowded city? She could not go anywhere without being stared at, and censured. Respectable places—like Museums, she believed to be closed before eight o'clock, and to none of the livelier places could she go without an escort. If she took a drive into the country, it would not be very amusing in the dark, and she would have to come back before the party in Curzon Street had broken up. Worried by doubts and perplexities, she scarcely dared to get out when the carriage pulled up at the Savoy. But there was Hugh Pemberton coming down the steps to meet her, and her heart gave a bound of relief.

He had an overcoat thrown over his evening things, and his hat was drawn over his eyes, but as he raised it, she saw that his face was unusually pale, and had a queer sort of set expression about the mouth and chin. He was acutely conscious that the eyes of the men grouped about the door were upon them, as he held out his hand to assist Beatrice to alight, and she looked straight up into his face with a smile of frankest welcome.

"I was in such a fright lest you should not come," she said with another sigh of relief, as they mounted the steps together.

"You knew I should if your note reached me" gravely.

"Yes, but there was the doubt."

"The Crosbys have not arrived," he said for the benefit of those men at the door.

"Millie is always unpunctual; but perhaps—Ah here they are! Is that funny little man Sir Digby?" with a gleam of amusement in her eyes.

"My husband was engaged, so I thought this would be more lively," Beatrice explained, after the first greetings were over.

"A thousand times nicer," exclaimed Lady Crosby. "I love the Savoy."

As they made their way up the room to the table in the corner, Millie, who seemed to be in the highest spirits, nodded right and left "There is the Austrian—I forget his name—and Geoffrey Talbot, of course. He looked at you, Bee, and you cut him dead. And there's the odious Mrs. Pringle who wanted me to see her, but I wouldn't."

Lady Falconer paid no attention whatever to these remarks. She

signed to Sir Digby to sit at her right hand whilst his wife was opposite to him, in a post of advantage where she could see from one end of the room to the other. Hugh as the old friend, took the place of host, and devoted himself to the fair Millie. That is to say, she had his smiles, his looks, and his words, but his thoughts were given to Beatrice.

Sir Digby was short, with a round sunburnt face, and fair hair so closely cropped that there was scarcely half an inch of it left. He was not in the least good-looking, but he had a plain sensible face, with a remarkably alert pair of eyes. Beatrice liked him, and gave him all the attention she could spare from her absorbing troubles. She made him tell her of his experiences in the States, and having the tact to see that his hostess, in spite of her youth, and evident health and prosperity, was in no mood for laughter, he racked his brain for some of the most interesting episodes of his erratic tour. Hugh as usual watched and wondered, guessing that another crisis had arisen in Curzon Street, and feeling most hopelessly in the dark. He knew by the wild throb of delight that the sight of Beatrice's hand-writing had given him, that it would have been better for himself if he had been out of reach, but it never occurred to him to wish it. It was everything to be able to help her, to save her as he was doing now from an awkward predicament; and so long as he kept himself well in hand there was every probability of this sort of thing going on to the end of the chapter. He must subdue feeling, ignore passion, and develop or rather stiffen into a machine. He was making this programme for his own edification, whilst he appeared to be listening with an amused smile to Lady Crosby's chatter. If only Beatrice could be happy—and quite prosaically jolly as she used to look across a tennis-net, then he thought he could have been content. He thought so, but he was mistaken, for now that his love had lost all the safe fraternal tinge which had lasted so many years, nothing could have contented him short of possession. She was the one woman in the world to him, and that one woman was the wife of Lord Falconer. There was the turnpike-gate before him—not to be opened or jumped, and yet nothing could induce him to go round by another road. In fact to his dazzled eyes there was no other road to be seen.

"Were you able to get places for us anywhere?"

It was the first time she had appealed to him since dinner had

begun, and he answered directly—"Yes—no stalls—but a box came in just as I was there, returned upon their hands, and I pounced at once."

"At the Gaiety? You won't mind being dragged off to a theatre, Sir Digby?"

"Delighted—I've seen nothing, and been nowhere."

"You've seen me," said Millie with a pout, "and that's enough for most men."

"Enough for almost any man" responded Hugh gallantly.

"My wife thinks that matrimony is very nice—taken in fortnights," remarked Millie's husband with a quiet smile. "She says it is time for me to be off again. I'm getting stale."

"No, you are still the freshest thing out, and all your stories are positively new, and not only hashed up remains of last year's mistakes," Millie said encouragingly.

At any other time it would have amused Beatrice immensely to see the sedate little man and his frisky wife together. It was evident that they were really fond of each other, but nevertheless she fancied there was a grain of truth in Sir Digby's remark, for she was sure that Millie would be bored to death with a husband always at her elbow. If Falconer would only be bitten by the mania of travel, she herself might make something fairly pleasant of life after all. Oh, if he only would. She looked up to find that dinner was evidently over, and that Millie was buttoning on her gloves preparatory to an adjournment to the Gaiety, whilst Sir Digby was fumbling in his pocket.

"Captain Pemberton, you will settle for my husband. This is supposed to be his entertainment you know, though he was obliged to be absent," she explained, as she rose from her seat. Instantly Geoffrey Talbot rose from his, as if they were two marionettes pulled by the same string. He caught her up halfway to the door, and was glad to know that envious eyes were fixed upon him as he shook hands with beautiful Lady Falconer.

"Where are you off to?" he asked eagerly. "Anywhere where I can follow?"

"The doors of the Gaiety are open to all."

"Boxes or stalls?" as he walked by her side towards the entrance.

"A box." Ask Captain Pemberton, he knows the details" carelessly.



"Such ages since I've seen you," ardently. "How's the Bishop?" (as if he were his dearest friend). "I wonder if he remembers me."

"He never forgets a face. Has he ever seen yours?" with a sudden mischievous smile.

Geoffrey Talbot was not the only man who invaded No. 15 on the second row. Millie was one of the most popular women in London, and Beatrice perhaps the most admired. There was therefore, a constant succession of migratory men, and Hugh could not find a single moment for private conversation. Lookers on thought they were the most cheerful party in that gay little theatre. A constant interchange of wit and chaff went on between every act, and anyone could vouch for the fact that Beatrice had not lost her tongue. There was an almost defiant brilliancy in her talk, and every now and then she would give vent to an epigram which had a bitterness in it that only Hugh could fathom. Presently, some one asked where Falconer was.

In the silence that followed, Beatrice said quietly as she fanned herself gently "At home, entertaining a menagerie."

"I met a man in the States" Sir Digby put in with a quickness for which Hugh blessed him, "who had a fancy for snakes, and upon my word, when I was dining with him, a nasty slimy brute tried to take the fork out of my hand."

"I should have surrendered everything to him and bolted," Talbot affirmed.

Beatrice smiled, and said slowly, "That is the only thing to be done under some circumstances," and Hugh, guessing at once what was the sort of emergency that had arisen in Curzon Street, felt an insane desire to burn the house down over its master's head.

"I have never enjoyed anything half so much" Millie Crosbie exclaimed as the curtain fell. "I don't feel the least little bit inclined to go home. What can we do?"

"Why not have an oyster supper at Arminel's. Isn't that the place? And Lady Falconer you won't desert us? and all you fellows come too," Sir Digby suggested hospitably.

The suggestion was carried unanimously, only Beatrice felt in duty bound to murmur something about keeping the carriage waiting too long. Still she was determined not to return to Clifford House till the latest moment; so she gave way at once when Sir

Digby said "Send it away and if you will allow me, I will escort you home."

Millie opened her eyes wide as she heard him, and almost fancied that one day the tables would be turned, and she would be jealous of her flighty husband, instead of his being jealous of his flirty wife. The States had certainly rubbed off some of his sedateness, and she only hoped that he would not develope into the thing she liked to flirt with, but had never meant to marry—"a larky man about town!"

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### COMING HOME TOO SOON.

BEATRICE felt an absolute horror of the house, when she returned to her home soon after midnight. To her hypercritical eyes it seemed to have already lost something of its former air of order and privacy. The curtains that should have been drawn at intervals down the long hall were all pulled back, and she could see as far as the smoking-room, the door of which was ajar. As she stood at the foot of the broad flight of stairs, a burst of laughter from that open door broke the silence, and Sir Digby saw her shiver.

"Nothing more that I can do for you?" he asked, with a kindly look in his grey eyes.

"Thank you ever so much—nothing," with a sweet smile. "Good-night. Tell Millie not to forget to meet me to-morrow at the Old Masters."

Her foot was already on the lowest step of the stairs when she heard a man's heavy tread coming from the end of the hall. Involuntarily she cast a hasty look at the baronet, who had stopped when on the point of departure, and was now waiting on the doormat. Then she drew herself up, set her teeth, and turned her indignant face towards her husband. How dared he come straight to her from that detestable company in the smoking-room? Was he lost to all sense of shame?

"So you've come back," he said slowly, looking at her with fierce anger in his eyes. "Lucky for you——"

"Don't you see Sir Digby Crosby?" she interrupted hastily, having no wish to drag her domestic miseries before the eye of the public.

"Of course I see him," he returned impatiently. "How do, Crosby?" going towards him reluctantly. "So you've turned your back on freedom, and got into fetters again."

"Yes, and I find them rather comfortable," he said composedly, wondering if he were doing any good by staying on, when the other man so evidently wished to get rid of him.

"I don't want to seem inquisitive," said Falconer with a short laugh, "but may I ask if you two have been spending this long evening together?"

"My wife and Lady Falconer are great allies, and we have had a most enjoyable evening together," Sir Digby said, with a glance towards Beatrice, who was still standing at the foot of the stairs, with one hand resting on the delicately carved bannister. Then he made a little movement towards the door, hoping that she would, at the same moment, take the opportunity for escape.

"I've heard that two's company, but three's dull work—awfully dull, I should say."

"We were not three, but four—and sometimes half-a-dozen," Beatrice said coldly. And then she turned to Sir Digby with a sudden softening of her expression. "I am sure you will excuse me—but I am so tired."

As she went slowly up the stairs, her husband's eyes followed her. The small, dark head, how well it looked as it rose above the fur with which her white wrap was bordered. As he watched, she reached the landing, and as she turned to ascend the next flight, the light of the large lamp suspended from the ceiling fell full upon her face, and there was something in it to-night which struck him even more than its beauty, for it was the face of a desperate woman—and this at the age of eighteen! It was his work, and he recognised the hideous fact with an inward shudder. For a whole minute he stood there as if his feet had taken root, whilst Sir Digby was walking homewards at a brisk pace, and Simmons was seeing to the fastenings of the door. If Beatrice had come home, jubilant over a festive evening, and a hot flirtation, he would have hardened, but simply because she had said so little and yet evidently felt so much, a tinge of remorse crept over his disturbed mind.

"This shall never happen again," he resolved, as he went back to the smoking-room. Faugh! The room smelt like a public! And Nina's cheeks were almost as red as her hair. She looked up at

him as he came in, and then hurriedly pushed away her cards, pocketed her winnings, and stood up.

"Closing time," muttered Dick Winter, as he gulped down the remains of his brandy and water, and threw the end of his cigar into the grate behind him. His muddy complexion, bloodshot eyes, and sandy whiskers were often seen at race-meetings, but rarely in decent society. The Earl patronised him, because he had found that his tips could sometimes be trusted, and his conversation was on a level with his own tastes.

Captain Lester's name was not to be found in any English Army List, but he was supposed to have seen some sort of service abroad.

He was a short, broad-shouldered man, with a keen, intelligent expression. His legs looked like a jockey's, his general appearance was that of a groom in private clothes, and his talk was horsey. His marriage with the daughter of a book-maker increased his fortune, but as it, at the same time, developed his proclivities for the turf, it was also a means of diminishing it. He was a good-tempered man on the whole, but as his friends expressed it, he could "cut up rusty," on occasion, and he felt anything rather than amiable at the moment when his host came back after his short absence, looking as if his mental barometer had changed from "set fair," to "stormy." He put the change down to his "fine-lady wife," and gave Mrs. Lester—a frail looking girl in blue silk, with the air of a frightened hare—a violent nudge, as he said in an audible aside, "Orders given to clear out. Look sharp."

Falconer frowned, but only said gruffly: "Too late for another deal, I suppose, Mrs. Lester, but at any rate you've lost nothing."

"No indeed, I've been most wonderfully lucky," her eyes brightening as she held her winnings, tied up in her handkerchief, like a school girl after a scramble for sweets. "Good-night, Lord Falconer."

Nina brushed her aside as if she were a fly. "And how am I to get back to St. John's Wood?" looking up into his unresponsive face with eager eyes, which asked in vain for an answering smile.

"In a cab, I suppose. Have a hansom?" and he went to the bell and rang it.

"One for us, too, please," from Captain Lester.

"It's a long, lonely drive," she pouted.

"Pity you did not suggest to Sartoris to come and fetch you," he remarked, sarcastically.

"Pity I bothered myself to come at all," she answered, crossly, though she had enjoyed herself most heartily. It rankled in her mind that Falconer's wife still possessed enough influence over him to make him anxious to get rid of them all, *without* exception.

"Pity you did, if you didn't want to," Falconer agreed, with his usual politeness.

"Now, you two," remonstrated Harry Lester, with good-humoured familiarity, "don't spoil an awfully jolly evening by a split at the last. When a man's lost his money, his temper's sure to follow it, and a wise woman knows when to leave him alone."

If Falconer felt grateful for his friend's interference he carefully concealed the fact, and the hansoms having been announced, bade them all good-night in the room, without troubling himself to go out to the door.

Mrs. Sartoris was not at all inclined to be disposed of so quietly. She understood the position of affairs exactly. She had a certain amount of shrewdness which enabled her to guess that Lady Falconer had left the house because she did not consider her husband's friends fit to be her guests.

Nina owed her no grudge for this, and appreciated the relief afforded by her absence. But that the man who had invited them should suddenly become ashamed of them, because his wife came home five minutes too soon, Nina could neither understand nor forgive. She would have done better, from her own point of view, to keep her anger to herself, and to get out of his sight as quickly as possible. In her green dress, with every chiffon frill dragged and tumbled, with faded flowers hanging limply with broken petals and bruised leaves, her hair tumbled and out of curl, with the ends dropping in utter dishevelment over her eyes, her usually pink and white face overspread by one all-engrossing crimson flush, she did not look a captivating object. Falconer, in his transient fit of disenchantment, mentally contrasted her with Beatrice, as he had just seen her, with her high-bred grace and perfect refinement, and called himself a consummate idiot for ever having looked at this other girl twice.

"I've a great mind to say I will never come here again," she cried, with an angry flash in her light eyes.

"I don't think you will be asked. It has been a mistake from the beginning," he said, as calmly as if he were discussing the weather.

"A mistake, my coming here!" she exclaimed, with a gasp, for her excitement took her breath away. "It was you that asked me, you that begged me to come, you that told me to slip out of the house without letting Jack know, and now you turn on me."

"Don't talk nonsense," he said, impatiently; "I only meant that another time ——"

"There won't be another time," sharply.

"Oh, very well, just as you like; only if there *is* another time, we will dine somewhere else."

"Yes, you daren't ask your friends to your own house," she cried, mockingly, in a high falsetto that exasperated him, especially as she was standing by the open door. "Do you know you came back to us looking like a naughty boy that had just been whipped. I could have laughed in your face."

Falconer made a step forward. "Go home and laugh in Sartoris's face, if you've the pluck to do it."

An instant change came over the excited girl. Her flush faded, her eyes looked frightened. "I daren't go home—it's too late—Jack will kill me! What is to become of me?"

Falconer heard her without one vestige of pity. "You will go to Jermyn Street, to the sick sister you said you were going to nurse," he said, in a hard voice. "She will let you in at any hour, rather than make a scandal in the street and lose her lodgers."

"Mrs. Sartoris, are you never coming?" It was Dick Winter's voice from the hall, and probably both hailed it as a welcome interruption.

Without a word Nina dragged herself limply from the room, and Falconer remained standing where she had left him, with an expression of ineffable disgust upon his countenance.

*(To be continued.)*

## The Evolution of Nihilism.

By A. M. JUDD.

It would be interesting to trace the factors in the change which has taken place in Russia since the days of Ivan the Terrible, whose persecution of his subjects was taken as the will of God. He was their "Little Father."

When he chose to consign them to prison, torture and death, when he had the Metropolitan of the Russian Church strangled and hundreds of priests flogged to death at Novgorod, when he had thousands of his subjects scourged and tortured to death, not a single hand was raised to hinder or avenge these outrages, though they went on for forty years. The people believed that all who suffered patiently and humbly whatever the Tsar chose to inflict upon them, would be recompensed with eternal bliss.

These ideas were fully shared by Ivan. In a letter of his—still extant—to one of his victims, Prince Kourbski, who chose to flee rather than submit to the will of his sacred majesty, he charges it against him as a sin that he should dare to escape from his clutches. He writes; "If you are a just and God-fearing man, as you say, tell me why you have fled, instead of receiving from my hand the torture and the death which would procure you a place in Heaven?"

It is not recorded what answer, if any, Prince Kourbski returned to this remarkably cool epistle, but it is an undoubted fact that the majority of Ivan's victims accepted the inevitable without a murmur, and went to their fate, however cruel it might be, in the dogged belief that it was Heaven-sent. Abject submission to the Tsar was the sacred ideal, which had been held before them from their earliest youth. When Prince Kepnin, after being impaled, was dying a slow death of most frightful agony, he sang hymns in honour of the Tsar, his master and murderer.

But times change. Peter the Great's subjects were by no means so submissive. His reforms provoked several outbreaks of open rebellion.

One of the most extraordinary of his innovations was that against the beards of his subjects. In 1705, fashion—that most autocratic



of all monarchs—had condemned the beard in every other country in Europe, and had banished it from civilised society. But this only made the Russians cling more tenaciously to their ancient ornament, as a mark to distinguish them from foreigners, whom they hated. Peter, however, resolved that they should be shaven. He did not stop to consider the danger of so despotic an attack upon the time-hallowed customs and prejudices of his countrymen. He shaved off his own beard, made his courtiers do the same, and determined that the rest of his subjects should follow suit without distinction of rank.

His fiat went forth: not only the army, but all ranks of citizens, from the nobles to the serfs, should go beardless; or, if they still insisted upon wearing a beard, should pay dearly for the privilege.

A certain time was given, so that persons might get over their first repugnance to the order; after which every man who chose to retain his beard was to pay a tax of one hundred roubles. The priests and the serfs, however, were put on a lower footing, and were allowed to retain theirs upon payment of a kopeck every time they passed the gate of a city.

Peter's subjects did not submit humbly, as those of Ivan had been wont to do. Great discontent prevailed, and thousands had the will, but lacked the courage, to revolt. The Tsar was not a man to be trifled with, and though the murmurs were both loud and deep the majority thought it wiser to cut off their beards, rather than to run the risk of incensing a ruler who would make no scruple about cutting off their heads.

For many years a considerable revenue was derived from those who still clung to their beloved beards. The collectors of the beard-tax gave in receipt for its payment a small copper coin, struck expressly for the purpose, and called the *borodovdiia* or the bearded. On one side it bore the resemblance of a nose, a mouth, and moustaches, with a long bushy beard, surmounted by the words, *Denyee Vyatee* (money received), the whole encircled by a wreath and stamped with the Black Eagle of Russia. On the other side it bore the date of the year. Every man who chose to wear a beard was obliged to produce this receipt on his entry into a town. Those who were refractory and refused to pay the tax were thrown into prison.

Times have changed. It is no longer the Tsar who arbitrarily

interferes with the facial ornamentation of his subjects; yet, if some of the Russian writers of the present day are to be believed, despotism is as rife as ever in the land. It is the officials now who use the power entrusted to them to despotically and habitually abuse their authority. The Tsar is ignorant of much of the injustice that is enacted in his name.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that Nihilism has been evolved from that injustice, or that to the swarming millions of half-famished peasants, who are being slowly but surely divorced from the soil, revolution seems the only way of redressing their wrongs, the only thing in life worth living for. Justice is not to be expected from the officials of the Russian internal Administration.

When in 1894 the closing of the second Catholic church in Kroze, near the Prussian frontier, caused some rioting among the peasants, a detachment of Cossacks was called in to suppress the disturbance, and in doing so committed atrocities which created much indignation throughout Europe. They not only rode down the peasants, killing eight of them and wounding forty-two, they also outraged fifteen married women and girls. Yet, from the official act of indictment, it appeared that the petitions of the peasants to the Tsar, praying him to leave them their church, were kept back by General Ofzensky, the Governor-General of the Province. He went to the church on the evening of the 10th of October, and when some peasants approached him with images of the Tsar and Tsarina, adorned with flowers, and asked, "What does the Tsar say to our petitions?" he replied: "The Tsar has rejected your request, the church must be closed." It was then the alleged rioting took place.

It need scarcely be said that only the wretched peasants were put on trial, the Cossacks not being indicted for their inhuman conduct.

What the treatment of the peasants by the soldiers was, may be imagined from the deposition of Cavalry Captain Siemionoff. Actuated by a feeling of humanity, which did him credit, he was assisting an old woman, who was prostrate on the ground, to rise, and for this he was actually *knouted* by his own men in the Church of Kroze.

Such a statement appears incredible, yet such was the account given of the trial, in the *Standard*, of October 13th, 1894.

The prisoners filled eight benches, and included, several who

were in an advanced state of consumption, a totally blind old man, and all the women and girls who had been outraged by the brutal Cossacks.

The peasants of both sexes were stripped and then knouted during the progress of the suppression of the riot. This, Governor Klingenberg himself deposed to, and he also admitted that the peasants were not armed, and that they knelt down and kissed his hands and the hem of his garment, praying that the church should not be closed until the Tsar had decided on their petition.

A number of the peasants were sentenced to periods of imprisonment varying from four months to ten years hard labour, the latter being recommended to the mercy of the Tsar. The rest were acquitted.

The *Standard* Correspondent adds that the Vienna and Polish papers, from which he quoted, might be inaccurate; but the fact that the Court of Justice had resolved to petition the Tzar to commute the heavy sentences to one year's simple imprisonment spoke clearly for the innocence of the peasants, who, instead of being rioters, were the victims of the drunken Russian soldiery.

Is it any wonder when such occurrences as this take place, that Nihilism should up-rear its head, and throw its baleful shadow over the land?

However, from whatever cause Nihilism has been evolved, it is certain that it is rife, and what is more it pervades all classes: students in the universities, members of the ministry, orthodox priests, court officials, no less than professors of various sciences, scions of the highest families, fashionable dressmakers and their assistants, peasants, factory hands, and aristocrats have been arrested as members of the widespread organisation, calling itself "The Friends of Political Liberty," but which the police call Nihilists, Anarchists, and Terrorists.

One curious fact is the number of women and girls who have embarked in the "cause," and these have belonged to all ranks, from the dainty aristocrat to the poor factory girl.

The Nihilists are wonderfully fertile in expedients for baffling the police, though their ruses do not always succeed.

A Nihilist girl, one Olga Linbatovna, had been exiled to Siberia, but managed to escape from there. She pretended to drown herself, and left her hat and cloak on the bank of a river, together with a

letter saying that she could no longer bear the life she was leading; so had determined to make away with herself. By this ruse she had the officials dragging the river for her dead body, and so kept them off the track of her living one.

Olga is described as being simple, quiet and modest; looking at her, it was difficult to believe that this unassuming girl was a Nihilist and escaped convict, familiar with condemnations, prisons, trials, escapes and adventures of every kind.

This outward simplicity and candour served her as a shield, and enabled her to escape from perils in which many men would have lost their lives. One anecdote will serve to show how resourceful she was. By some means the police had got wind of her presence, and almost had her in their grasp. A friend, distancing the *gendarmes* by a few moments, had merely time to rush breathless up the stairs, dash into her room, and exclaim, "Save yourself! the police!" when the latter were already surrounding the house. Olga had not even time to put on her bonnet. Just as she was she hurried to the back stairs and descended. Fortunately for her the *gendarmes* had not yet guarded the street door, and she was able to enter a little shop on the ground floor. She had only twenty kopecks in her pocket, but this did not trouble her; for fifteen she bought a cotton handkerchief and fastened it round her head in the fashion adopted by coquettish servant girls. With the five remaining kopecks she bought some nuts, and left the shop eating them in such a quiet, innocent manner, that the detachment of police, which meanwhile had surrounded the house, let her pass without even asking her who she was, although her description was well known.

The police always have strict orders to let no one who may arouse the slightest suspicion leave a house which they have surrounded. Their chagrin may be better imagined than described when they learned how they had let the prize slip through their fingers.

But all Nihilists are not so fortunate as Olga Linbatovna. Frightful indeed is the punishment meted out to those condemned.

Here is an account given by the late "Stepniak" of some prisoners who were to be posted to Siberia after undergoing about a year's detention in the Troubetzkoi Ravelin in the Fortress of Peter and Paul on the banks of the Neva, at St. Petersburg, the principal political prison of the Empire. The sanitary conditions under which the prisoners live are so awful that one year suffices to turn a

young, strong, healthy man into a prematurely aged, decrepit one, that is to say, if he survives. "Stepniak" relates that, "on July 26, 1883, there arrived at Moscow a number of political prisoners of both sexes deported to Siberia, who had been imprisoned in the Fortress of Peter and Paul. The arrival of the St. Petersburg train caused great commotion among the officials and others who were in the station. Most of the prisoners could not alight without help, some even were unable to move. The guard wanted to transfer them straightway to our train, so as to conceal their condition from the public. But this was impossible. Six of the prisoners fainted outright; the others could hardly stand. On this, the chief of the escort ordered litters to be brought, but, as the litters could not be got into the carriages, the unconscious prisoners had to be lifted out like corpses and carried on men's shoulders.

The first was Ignat Voloshenko. It is difficult to describe the horrible appearance of this man. Eaten up with scurvy, he was more like a putrefying corpse than a living being. Every moment he was torn with convulsions and appeared to be dying.

Alexander Pribylev had no scurvy, but he was so reduced that he could not stand and frequently fainted.

The next was Fomin, a military officer. The year before he was a strong man the picture of health; now he looked like a corpse, and for nearly two hours several doctors tried to bring him round, it was not until evening that he was sufficiently restored to resume his journey.

Paul Orlov, twenty-seven years old, and once remarkable for his stature and strength, was now hardly recognizable. He was bent like an old man, and one of his feet was so crippled that he could scarcely walk. He had scurvy in its most terrible shape, blood was continually oozing from his gums and flowing into his mouth."

There were women also among this ghastly party. "Tatiana Lebedeva had been sentenced to death, but it was commuted to penal servitude for life. The speedy death sentence would have been kinder for the wretched creature than what she must have suffered under its commutation. She was in the last stage of consumption and racked with a terrible cough. She was so eaten up with scurvy, that nearly all her teeth were gone and the flesh had fallen away, leaving her jawbones quite bare. Her aspect was that

of a skeleton, partly covered with parchment-like skin; the only sign of life about her being her still bright black eyes.

Strangely enough, another woman, Yakimova, was the only one of the party who did not appear to have suffered very much, either morally or physically for her detention in the Troubetzkoi Ravelin, yet she had been there longer than some of the others, for the eighteen months old babe she bore in her arms was born in that dismal dungeon, and she had had to fight for its life with the rats that swarmed there. Perhaps maternal love had swallowed up everything else, and her care for her child had prevented her dwelling upon her own sufferings, anyway, notwithstanding the penal servitude for life which was before her, she bore herself with composure and firmness. But the poor infant was doomed, no one could look at it unmoved, it seemed as though every gasp would be its last."

There must be something very wrong with a government under which such horrors as these can be perpetrated. Yet all this severity does not deter Nihilists from following in the footsteps of their doomed companions.

The despotism in Russia, even under the present Tsar Nicholas II., enlightened and liberal though he be in his ideas, is almost incredible to those who live in a free country and with a free press. Autocrat of all the Russias though he be, the young Tsar has shown that he has a feeling heart in his bosom, he has interested himself in the affairs of the unhappy Captain Dreyfus, as to whom there is some doubt about his actual guilt, it is safe to infer that many of the acts of cruelty and oppression in his own land are the work of officials who have their own base objects to serve, be it revenge or avarice, and who pursue their course with little regard to truth and justice, and still less to humanity.

It would be hard to point out a remedy for the existing state of things in Russia. Unfortunately there, the Sovereign, let him be ever so willing to do the best he can for the vast millions of subjects over whom he holds absolute sway, is so closely surrounded by persons who have an interest in concealing from him the actual state of things in his dominions, and in the maintenance of corruption and official abuses, that the truth can hardly ever reach his ears. Yet that Nicholas II. is looking personally into matters concerning the criminals in his dominions, appears to be evidenced

by the Ukase that has only lately (April 1897) been published in the *Russki Invalid* concerning the unfortunate wretches condemned to Siberia. By this order the Emperor provides that they shall be conveyed by rail instead of having to walk the whole distance from Tomsk to Irkutsk, which took close upon a hundred days. The prisoners often had to wait years in the central prisons before being able to continue their journey. The sexes were crowded together indiscriminately, and many fell victims to infectious diseases. Happily now the worst horrors of the journey to Siberia will be things of the past, because of the new order.

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### Father's Paragon.

By MISS CHRISTIANSEN.

"THERE'S an expression about his eyes I don't like, auntie," said Ina Vincent, as she stood near the window one dark winter's afternoon, looking earnestly at a photograph. She was judging it very critically. "The mouth has a determined look. No, I don't care for his looks, though, no doubt, many would call him handsome."

"But remember, dear, that photographs are frequently misleading. Your father says he is most agreeable; you must not be prejudiced; wait till you meet him."

"But I don't want to meet him. A man who is willing to marry a girl he has never even seen, especially when she has money, cannot be either nice or refined."

"He may have seen either you or your photograph somewhere, and *may* have fallen in love with you; such things do happen."

"Perhaps they do, but it can only be from my photograph, for he has been long in India. Besides, you must admit I've altered considerably since I was photographed four years ago. I was then an awkward school-girl, now I'm grown up." As she made the remark she drew herself up, showing off her graceful figure to advantage. Leaving the window she went towards the fireplace, and placed the photo against a vase on the overmantel, opposite to her aunt.



"What do you think of him, auntie? Don't be frightened of hurting my feelings, I have none as far as he is concerned. The Hon. Clive Bruce is nothing to me."

"He is gentlemanly-looking, perhaps a little stern; he has a good, well-knit figure. How did Owen get it?"

"He saw it lying on a table, among a heap of others, at Lord Lester's rooms, so asked if he might have it, knowing how anxious I was to see him. His name being written across it caught Owen's attention."

"Well, my dear, promise me to do nothing rashly. He may be a charming young man, and perhaps as innocent as you are in having anything to do with this marriage."

"But the Wiltons are poor, so do you think he would have thought of me had I been a penniless maiden?"

Ina had inherited her mother's fortune of sixty thousand pounds; and was, therefore, a desirable match for the son of an impoverished earl, rich only in children.

"I can say nothing about it. Your father said he would call some day, Ina."

"When you will entertain him, I shall peep at him from behind the curtains as he goes away. I do wish he would call on Wednesday, when I shall be at Richmond."

"If he does I shall ask him to call again when you are at home; you must at least see him."

Ina was the only surviving child of Colonel Vincent, who was then serving with his regiment in Bengal. Having lost his wife when his little daughter was but five years old, he brought her to England and placed her under the care of his widowed sister, who had but one son, five years older than his cousin. Mrs. Tremaine welcomed the motherless child to her home, where for the last fifteen years she had been treated as a daughter.

Living in close companionship with her cousin, Ina looked upon Owen as an elder brother, and treated him accordingly. As years went on it never seemed to strike her that their affection could alter, that there should be any wish to be otherwise than brother and sister. But lately Owen found, to his cost, that the affection he felt towards his companion was something warmer and deeper than brotherly love; but he likewise saw how hopeless was the expectation of any alteration in her feelings towards him.

Their calm happy life, however, had been unexpectedly disturbed by a letter from Colonel Vincent, announcing his early arrival in England. The object of his visit, he intimated to his sister, was to arrange a marriage between his daughter and the son of his old friend, Lord Wilton.

The information came like a bombshell upon his relations—to Ina especially so. Without a hint on the subject, to hear that a husband was already selected for her was startling; and from the tenour of the letter everything seemed to be arranged, the necessary co-operation of bride and bridegroom being all that was required. Ina was hurt and indignant at being so quickly and cavalierly disposed of; Owen furiously and bitterly disappointed.

By the following mail Ina received a kind, affectionate letter from her father. In it he confided to her his wishes, and hoped she would see her way to gratify them, as she would gain a charming and agreeable man for her husband.

Colonel Vincent, having been for the last five years in India, had forgotten that the shy awkward girl of sixteen had become a young woman, with likings and opinions of her own.

To reply to such a letter Ina found a difficult task. She pleaded hard for a few years of liberty, to act as his companion when he retired from active service, and ended her entreaty by begging that if the wedding ever did take place it might be in the far future.

This answer greatly disappointed the colonel, who, after due consideration, deemed it wiser to let matters drop until he arrived in England, and intimated that Mr. Bruce would defer the pleasure of making her acquaintance till after the writer's arrival.

"What time is your train due at Clapham Junction?" asked Owen at breakfast, on the day that Ina had arranged to go to Richmond.

"Six forty-five. Why do you ask?"

"Because I'll meet you there and drive home with you."

"That is kind. Will that time suit you, for I can alter it?" replied Ina, eagerly.

"It will suit me perfectly. Now listen. I shall wait in the subway at the foot of No. 4 staircase—you know where I mean."

"I do, the numbers are large enough for anyone to see."

"Tell Simons to have the brougham at the London and Brighton side of the station. Till six forty-five adieu." Waving his hands to the ladies he left the room.

Ina very shortly afterwards started for Victoria, her aunt accompanying her for the sake of the drive.

"Take that shawl with you to put round your throat to-night," said Mrs. Tremaine, as Ina stepped out of the brougham; "it will be very cold when you come back."

As she was dressed in a thick cloth dress and sealskin jacket, her appearance hardly suggested the addition of a shawl. However, to please her aunt she took it.

"I wish you could have Mr. Bruce with you to-day," Ina remarked, saucily; "I feel sure he would amuse you." And after shutting the door she turned into the booking office, looking very bright and lively. In spite of her laughing allusion to Mr. Bruce the thought of him always evoked inward rebellion. However, there still remained six weeks before she need meet that gentleman, and a great deal might happen in that time.

During the day she spent with her friends all her worries were forgotten; they talked and laughed very merrily until tea was brought in, when she was reminded of the flight of time. It suggested trains which would not wait; and though very loth to quit her friend's cosy fireside, she felt in duty bound to go, as Owen had promised to meet her.

It was only after getting out of Richmond station that she noticed how foggy it had become. At first she thought it was steam on the windows but found it to be fog, that became denser and darker each minute as she got nearer London. The houses became indistinct, and the people moved like phantoms; the names of the stations she could only hear. At last, after repeated signals and perpetual stoppings, the train eventually reached Clapham Junction, quite half-an-hour late.

After groping her way along the platform and asking various porters, she at last found a flight of steps leading into the subway, which happily for her proved to be No. 4. "I shall be thankful to get company," she thought, as she looked all round and saw no one at all resembling Owen. "I fear I'm very late, but surely he wouldn't leave me alone in this fog?"

The cold air of the draughty passage made her shiver. She drew her aunt's luckily proffered shawl round her, till only her eyes were left visible, and taking her stand at the foot of the steps waited anxiously.

Ten minutes passed, and still no sign of Owen. Every now and again, on the arrival of a City train, a crowd of gentlemen would fill the subway, and her hopes revived, expecting Owen to be among the number, but in vain.

After waiting half-an-hour, during that time being favoured by an impertinent stare from some of the passengers, she became desperate and determined to go and find the carriage. The fog was now so dense, she could hardly see a yard before her. At that moment, with a shout of relief, she rushed forward, and put her arm affectionately through that of a gentleman.

"O! I am so thankful you have come at last. I could scream with delight! Where have you been? I'm terrified to be alone in such a fog; I've waited nearly three-quarters of-an-hour for you." Clinging as close as possible to him, she added, "I was afraid you had forsaken me, and I should have to drive home alone." By this time they emerged from the tunnel, and found the carriage. "All right, Simons—home," she said, as she stepped into the brougham. "Quick, Owen, jump in," she said sharply. "I'm starved to the bone, it is so raw."

Her companion did as he was told, and the carriage rolled on.

"Have you been waiting long? And are you so very angry, that you won't speak?" she said coaxingly, putting her face very close to his, and looking up to see a fair, good-looking young man smiling back at her.

"I fear we have both made a mistake," he replied, "but it was so dark in the subway, and you had your face so covered up, it was impossible to distinguish anyone."

Ina shrunk back into the corner of the carriage, and turned crimson, though the darkness prevented her companion seeing it.

"I had to meet my cousin here at 6.45, and I thought you were he," she said, almost crying with fright and vexation.

"As you have not met him, will you allow me to see you safely home? You have just told me that you were frightened to drive home alone. I will get outside with the coachman, if you object to my company."

"Oh, please do nothing of the kind. Perhaps I am taking you out of your way? I live in Cadogan Square," said Ina, horrified when she remembered how she had clung to this stranger, and almost dragged him into the carriage.

"And I in Pont Street, so we are near neighbours," he said kindly, trying to put her at her ease. "Do try and think that you are safer here—even with me—than alone in that dark subway."

"But what did you think of me when I seized you so, as I did? You thought it was a pickpocket?"

"No! I saw your mistake. Now I am anxious to see Owen. I shall hope to meet him some day. I had waited some time for a friend, and was so cold, I was willing to be claimed by anybody."

Suddenly the carriage stopped. Ina dropped the window and enquired the cause.

"I don't know where we are, miss. It's pitch dark, and the lights are of little use. I can't see a yard before me."

"Let us find a policeman," said the stranger, jumping out, "he'll help us. Move very gently on till we meet someone."

The gentleman led the horse carefully along by the kerbstone, till a workman showed them the road to Chelsea Bridge, where they obtained a linkman.

After innumerable stoppages and narrow escapes of being run down, they eventually entered Sloane Street, and recognised that they were close at home.

"You will allow me to give you my card," her escort remarked, as he took out his card case. "There are queer people about on a night like this," he added, smiling.

"Yes; people who pick up strangers and drag them into carriages," she answered humbly. "I feel inclined to conceal my identity after such conduct."

"Oho! think how comfortably I have got home; besides, another boon, I've become acquainted with one of my neighbours. But—I should like to know her name."

"It is one you will soon forget—Ina Vincent."

It was too dark for her to see her companion start as he heard the name; nor did she notice how earnestly he looked at her.

"Are you any relation to Colonel Vincent, now stationed at Lahore?"

"He is my father. Why do you ask?"

"Because I know him very well indeed."

"Who may I tell father I have met?"

"Lord Wallis. Is any time fixed for his return?"

"Yes; I expect him very shortly, for six months."

"Then I shall hope to meet him."

The carriage here drew up at Mrs. Tremaine's door, and after mutual pleasure being expressed at their meeting, Ina entered the house, and Lord Wallis went on to Pont Street.

\*     \*     \*

During the next few weeks, the friendship so unexpectedly formed, progressed very rapidly towards intimacy. Lord Wallis found many excuses to call at Cadogan Square, and Mrs. Tremaine always felt in his debt, for his timely aid in bringing her niece home from Clapham.

One afternoon when, as usual, Lord Wallis was enjoying Ina's society beside a roaring fire, whose bright, ruddy blaze formed a pleasing contrast to the chilly, raw day outside, he happened to stand talking, close to the mantelpiece, and took up, in an absent-minded manner, first one little nick-nack and then another, till he came upon a photograph stuck well in the background.

"The Honourable Clive Bruce. Who is he, may I ask?" at the same time taking it up and examining the photo closely. "A friend of yours?" he enquired. "The face seems familiar to me."

"Oh, that is a friend of my father's," she replied, blushing, and looking very disconcerted.

"He looks nice. Don't you know him also?"

"I don't, and I have no wish to make his acquaintance."

"Why not? Is he a disagreeable personage?"

"He may or may not be, but I have reasons for declining his acquaintance. I am told he is a paragon, and I hate perfect people, they are so uncomfortable."

Lord Wallis seemed highly amused, and kept stroking his moustache vigorously to conceal a smile. "Did Mr. Bruce send you this photograph?"

"Oh dear no; my cousin came across it at a friend's chambers, and knowing I was curious to see it, begged it of his friend. When father comes home, I shall have to know him," she added, with a deep sigh.

"So you are taking stock of him now?"

"Yes! What do you think of him?"

Lord Wallis studied the portrait for a few seconds, then remarked, "He is decidedly handsome; he reminds me of two friends."

"Of two? What a mixture he must be!"

"He is, but still, good looking;" after which the portrait was put back in its place.

"Well, I shall likely see the Adonis someday," she replied, sighing again.

"Why do you sigh?" he asked, sitting down beside her.

"Because I am very miserable. Father wants me to marry this paragon, and I rebel at being disposed of like a bale of goods. Any feeling, let alone love, seems to be forgotten in the arrangement. I am simply told I have to marry him."

"Surely not forced to do so unwillingly?"

"I can't tell you what will happen—perhaps carried off to India if I refuse."

"Miss Vincent, promise me you won't marry Mr. Bruce unless you love him."

"Promise you, Lord Wallis; what can it possibly matter to you?" she rejoined, startled.

"All that matters to me most in the world, for I love you, and I cannot bear to think of your being unhappy. You must have seen my affection for you. I couldn't keep away from you. Can you try and love me a little?" He took hold of one of her hands, and with his face close to hers, added, "Don't send me away."

"I don't wish to," she replied, blushing, her whole face radiant with happiness, "I love you now."

For the next quarter of an hour their conversation took an egotistical turn.

"You will believe me that I am not taking you to escape the paragon?" she asked eagerly.

"I do heartily," he replied as he kissed her tenderly.

They were presently reminded of sublunary matters by the entrance of Mrs. Tremaine.

"I did not know you were here, I was busy writing letters," she remarked by way of apology for her absence.

"Pray don't mention it, don't stand on ceremony with me," said Lord Wallis politely. "Ina has made time pass very quickly."

"What has she been doing?" asked her aunt innocently.

"She has promised to be my wife," he answered triumphantly.

"Your wife!" Mrs. Tremaine exclaimed, "you don't really mean it—and she is as good as engaged to somebody else. Ina! what



will your father say? how I shall be blamed—really young people are not to be trusted," she said in a tragic tone of despair.

"I can assure you, you may trust Ina implicitly to my tender care," said his lordship proudly; she shall have my life's devotion."

But all argument was lost upon the lady; she blamed her own innocent stupidity for not seeing how matters were going—she had been faithless in her charge, and was wretched in consequence.

Ten days later Colonel Vincent arrived. Owen met his uncle at the station and drove with him to Cadogan Square.

Five years had made a great alteration in Ina's appearance. From leaving her a lanky girl of sixteen, her father found a tall slender young woman, whose dignity and carriage were those of a young queen. Her handsome features, clear complexion, and beautiful eyes, that smiled so delightfully, made a lovely face that charmed her father.

"My dear," he exclaimed, astonished and delighted, "how you have altered. I cannot recognise the little girl I left in the charming young woman before me," he added proudly. He had come back prepared to chaperone a daughter till he could marry her to the son of his friend, but he was unprepared for her beauty.

A bright happy evening passed quickly by, all unpleasant topics were avoided that night, and Mr. Bruce's photo carefully hidden away.

"Well Ina! come and talk to me," said her father the following day, "we have some important matters to discuss." Lighting his cigar he seated himself opposite to her. "It is no use beating about the bush, you know why I have come home; if anything happened to me, you would be very lonely."

"But, father, can't I chose for myself?" she said timidly.

"Not so well as I can for you. Tell me why do you object to Mr. Bruce?"

"Because I hate being given to a man like a bale of goods; my money is his attraction."

"Nothing of the kind, he is a very nice fellow."

"But suppose Mr. Bruce dislikes me when he sees me, what then?"

"I can't suppose that for an instant," said the colonel proudly.

"But father!" she stopped, and her face grew crimson; "I like someone else."

"You like someone else!" he repeated aghast, "who may that be?"

"Lord Wallis—I have promised to marry him."

"Who is Lord Wallis that he dares to interfere in my plans?" said the colonel sternly, "what was your aunt doing to allow such nonsense?"

"Auntie knew nothing about it—don't blame her. You will like Clive very much, he says he knew you well at Lahore."

"He says I knew him at Lahore! The man's an impostor. I never heard of him."

"Oh no he is not, you can judge for yourself shortly, you won't be hard on him will you?" she asked bewitchingly.

"I'll make no promises. You put me in an awkward position. I must inquire into this," and he took up the papers as a hint he wished to be alone.

"I shall not be in to lunch," he cried, as he went out a little later, "and if Lord Wallis calls say I'll see him later," a message that was delivered after it was politely disguised. Dinner was a very merry meal that night. The strangeness of meeting after years of separation had worn off, and the colonel was in the highest spirits.

"By the bye, I forgot to say I met Mr. Bruce at the club to-day, and I invited him to dinner to-morrow," remarked the colonel, as they separated for the night. "Will Lord Wallis be here Ina?"

"Not as Mr. Bruce is coming—he would prefer to come alone," she replied quietly. She felt disappointed at Mr. Bruce coming before Lord Wallis, still as matters now stood, it would prove it was from no personal feeling she had not taken him.

"Owen, you are late," said Ina, as she was coming down, and met her cousin bounding up the stairs to dress for dinner on the following night. "Do be quick, father is not yet in, and I shall have that man to entertain alone if he is any way punctual."

"All right, I'll hurry up, but you do look superb to-night, Ina. Clive should be here to see you."

"Do go, dear boy, and don't be long in beautifying," she whispered, and passed on.

Presently she heard a carriage drive up. "Here he comes," she said trembling. But he was not alone, she could hear her father's voice. When she remembered her father would take ten minutes to dress, and her aunt never appeared till the bell rang, she shivered at the prospect. Flight was still possible, but "he who hesitates is

lost," says the proverb, and it proved true, for the door opened and her father's remark of "go in there" settled the matter. With beating heart she turned proudly to greet their guest, when to her surprise Lord Wallis stepped forward.

"Clive," she gasped in a relieved tone, "I am glad to see you. So you know my father now?"

"Yes, he brought me upstairs."

"You remember who we are expecting to-night?"

"I do, the man you hate the sight of—Clive Bruce, now Clive Wallis."

Before she could recover from her astonishment, his arms were round her. "Forgive me for deceiving you, but it was my only chance."

"You Mr. Bruce? Oh, Clive how could you? But I don't believe you, for you are not a bit like your photo."

Lord Wallis laughed heartily. "No, I don't think I am. That photo is a composite one of six young men done by me after some theatricals. To distinguish which charade it represented, my name was written on it. That was why I said it reminded me of friends. To tell you I was Mr. Bruce meant banishment."

"How long have you changed your name?" she asked, still incredulous.

"About a month before you claimed me at Clapham? I got the title from an uncle."

"Well, you made me promise never to marry Mr. Bruce. So I'm free," she remarked, triumphantly.

"Certainly. I wished, and you promised, to marry Lord Wallis, so there's no escape for you."

"Hallo, Bruce, so you've captured the citadel after all," cried the colonel.

"Let me introduce the 'Impostor' to you, father," cried Ina, laughing.

Before Colonel Vincent returned to India, Ina had become Lady Wallis.

## Crossing the Rubicon.

By H. B. NEDHAM.

"OH, damnable atheist!" was one of Coke's abusive exclamations to Raleigh, whilst the latter was being tried for high treason in the year 1603. At this juncture Robert Cecil (Earl of Salisbury), one of the Commissioners, ventured to remark: "Be not so impatient, good Mr. Attorney." Whereupon, as the chronicler of the State trials hath it, Coke sat down "in a chafe," but began again after much ado in the court. "You are the absolutest traitor that ever was," and "Thou viper, for I *thou* thee, thou traitor," are some choice specimens of Coke's language, wherein he was unwittingly a bit of a reformer, for such disgraceful treatment of a great and gallant man in peril of his life attracted universal attention, and began that agitation in favour of fair play in judicial cases which was in time to become the rule after such ruffians of the law as Scroggs and Jeffreys had had their fling.

Just contrast this procedure with that in the case of the trial of Dr. Jameson and his fellow raiders of the Rand, and imagine how the latter would have fared under a legal gentleman of Coke's character, holding a brief from the Crown and endeavouring to lull by a pretty liberal use of Billingsgate the suspicions of his crooked-minded master. Such a comparison is interesting, as bearing in mind the differences of legal methods between now and then, and considering 1603 as but an anticipation of 1618, when the career of Raleigh ended, there are many circumstances offering a distinct parallel.

"Thou hast a Spanish heart, and thyself art a spider of Hell," continued Coke to the man who had fought the Dons wherever and whenever he could find them, and who was yet to try conclusions with them and to die at the bidding of the Spanish ambassador. At last the vile language of "good Mr. Attorney" made Sir Walter remonstrate, but the other quickly rejoined: "Thou art the most vile and execrable traitor that ever lived. I want words sufficient to express thy viperous treasons." To this Raleigh calmly answered: "I think you want words indeed, for you have spoken one thing

half-a-dozen times." And so the unequal contest went on. A hostile commission and a brow-beating attorney on one hand, backed by a monarch who never forgot and never forgave except as the coward forgives. On the other a fearless and brilliant gentleman, who had stamped his name indelibly in the annals of one glorious reign, and who, even behind prison bars, was yet to produce work which made the world marvel.

Sentenced to a traitor's death, he was relegated to the Tower, and there the Elizabethan sea rover, courtier, and statesman, became a scientist and historian. The king's own son stood his friend, and said that "nobody, except his father, would dream of keeping such a bird in a cage." Prince Henry even begged the Sherbourne estates, which had been lost through the attainder and given to the minion Somerset. James complied with the request and recompensed his favourite with £20,000, but the Prince died before he could restore the lands to the Raleighs as he had intended to do. It is said that the suspicion of his having been poisoned has been set at rest for ever by medical evidence; but bearing in mind all the details of the Sherbourne business, there seems ample motive for a crime of which Overbury's poisoner was certainly capable, the more so because in 1617 Raleigh, having tempted James to give him his liberty with the prospect of finding an El Dorado in Guiana, was able to say: "The whole history of the world had not the like precedent—of a king's prisoner to purchase his freedom and his bosom favourite to have the halter," words which were not forgotten, we may be sure, by that king and which, perhaps, saved Somerset's life.

Raleigh was expressly told that by fighting the Spaniards he would incur the death penalty on his return. Bacon warned him that any disobedience, such as an attempt to seize the Mexican plate fleet, would be piracy. But Raleigh answered: "Did you ever hear of men being pirates for millions?" So he sailed, it is pretty clear, with the idea that gold mine or no gold mine, treasure of some sort he must have or forfeit his life. If the Dons had to be fought in getting it so much the better, for then there would be a chance of wiping off old scores and avenging the tortures which so many Englishmen—and many a Devon man—had suffered at the hands of the Spaniards and their sanguinary Inquisition.

Raleigh, with his son Walter, his nephew George, and his trusty

lieutenant, Kemyss, had some fourteen ships under his command when he sailed from Plymouth. Things looked bad from the outset. The leader was handicapped in a way that the most ingenious devilry could hardly suggest, for the youngest cabin boy of that fleet, even if he regarded his admiral as a hero, knew him to be, "in the eye of the law," a convicted and unpardoned traitor. The old sentence hung like a pall over the enterprise. Besides experiencing difficulties in watering at the Canaries, they had forty days in the Doldrums. At last Guiana was reached, and it was found impossible to get at the mine without a brush with the Spaniards of San Thomás. Kemyss had charge of this particular service, and when he returned it was with the news of defeat and of young Walter's death in the fighting. The bitter invectives of Raleigh drove Kemyss to suicide. The crews grew mutinous and the vessels separated—Raleigh returning to meet his fate by way of St. Kitts and Newfoundland. Gondomar demanded his surrender, and James himself actually suggested that Raleigh and a dozen of his followers should be conveyed to Madrid and publicly hanged. Who had now "a Spanish heart?" It is on undisputed record that James, when he first came to England, came determined to ruin Raleigh; and it must be confessed that he showed a grim perseverance and a tenacity of purpose which only looked like relaxing when he momentarily loosed his captive, as a cat looses a mouse. Raleigh showed himself in the end as dignified as at his trial fifteen years before, and his last words, when asked to lay his head on the block in an eastward position, were: "What matter how the head lie so long as the heart be right?" Had a richly-laden galleon or two been brought home James and his new pet, Buckingham, would have gone shares, and Gondomar have clamoured in vain. But, as it was, dismal failure and royal hatred sealed Raleigh's fate. Spain must be gratified at all costs, or there would be no Spanish marriage for Prince Charles. A sentence fifteen years old was good enough, and it was acted on. As for the existence of the gold mine recent discoveries would seem to verify the mineral wealth of the Guiana.

Whether Dr. Jameson in raiding the Transvaal acted on his own responsibility or not is perhaps a point for discussion—in connection with matters still *sub judice*—but in any case, as has been already said, there are striking features of resemblance between Raleigh's

adventure and his. In the one drama we see the spirit of daring impelling a man to seek treasure at the expense of those who delighted to send his countrymen to the stake or—as in the case of the discoverer, Bass, even less than a century ago—to a living death in the mines. In the other we see the like bold facing of peril all the more courted, because Englishmen were being treated as beings of an inferior race by ignorant and backward Boers; English women and children were believed to be in danger, and the mineral wealth offered inviting possibilities in the future. But with Jameson, as with Raleigh, everything hinged on success. Both crossed the Rubicon and both failed. If we substitute a Philip for Kruger, Gondomar for Leyds, and King James for Queen Victoria, we may be pretty sure that a short shrift for the gallant Doctor would have been the necessary completion of such a change of *dramatis personæ*.

History has, in truth, been, to a great extent, carved out by men who have disobeyed orders, and who, if called to account after the event, have been able to claim that "nothing succeeds like success." That unlucky leader who not only fails, but while missing his venture, forgets into the bargain Sidney Smith's addition to the Decalogue, "Thou shall not get found out," has to pay the penalty, be it by a state trial or a court-martial. Empires, in short, have not by any means, been built up by wearers of kid gloves. Quite enough is known of the lives of great men of action to prove the truth of this up to the hilt. How much more is unknown? Had a Boswell been ever present by the side of Cromwell, in the saddle or council-chamber, what a different figure His Highness the Protector would have cut! Men of his stamp—the born leaders of the world—have probably been, one and all, guilty of riding rough shod over orders, or treating this or that article of a higher code with scant ceremony. When Pompey was at Capua, and Cæsar was at the other end of Italy, with Rome in a ferment between the two, the mastery of the world was the prize at stake. The conqueror of Gaul crossed the Rubicon, and triumphed. Strongbow, who began the English conquest of Ireland, was courting great risks, for Henry of Anjou was no monarch to be trifled with, and only the personal submission of the buccaneer baron, and the prompt giving up to the Crown of the Irish maritime cities, made the king forgive his subject's independent course of action. Cromwell, by turning rebel and



drawing his sword at forty, upset an ancient monarchy and erected a Commonwealth.

Priests and scientists, too, have made history by breaking through the accepted canons of their day. Luther verily did so when he committed matrimony and embarked on the stormy path of the Reformation. Galileo was tortured as a heretic because of his astronomical discoveries, whereby we may imagine how fanatic theologians (of whom there has never yet, in the history of the world, been a lack) would have dealt by Columbus, had he failed in his quest after a new world, for the daring Genoese navigator acted on geographical theories, utterly at variance with the properly regulated minds of his orthodox contemporaries.

With the great captains and pro-consuls of old, the absence of telegraphs must indeed have been a blessing; and it may be safely doubted whether much of India or America would be ours at the present moment, had the creators of the Empire been fettered by such wires from head-quarters, as was, for instance, one British general when ready for the re-conquest of the Transvaal. Again, it is interesting to surmise as to what would have happened, instead of the capture of Jamaica, had a Transatlantic cable been at the service of Cromwell, who rewarded his victorious admirals with lodgings in the Tower. A sudden emergency might entail with it great responsibility, and court flagrant disobedience to original instructions; but on the other hand, it might also mean that chance which, it is said, comes to every man once in his life. This recalls another interesting contrast, for to two famous men such golden opportunities came at least twice.

In 1796, General Hoche was sent by the French Directory to aid the Irish in their intended revolt. On December 21, there were thirty-five French sail off Cape Clear, with wind and weather fair, but Hoche and his vessel nowhere in sight. As one great historian remarks, had the army been landed, "nothing short of a miracle could save the English power in Ireland." At any time during that day or the next, had Grouchy, the second in command, ventured to act on his own responsibility, Cork must have fallen with its stores of two years' provision for our navy, valued at two millions. But Grouchy continued to cruise about according to orders, until the wind veered right round to the east. Then sixteen of his best ships beat up to Bere Island, but six days were fooled away, and although

the wind brought no English fleet, and the English flag was never seen, Grouchy preferring the risks of a furious gale at sea to a glorious chance amidst an eagerly friendly people on land, sailed away, and by and by the armament arrived almost intact at Brest, and Dublin Castle breathed again.

Many years later, Grouchy again had his chance when sent in pursuit of Blucher who had been badly beaten at Ligny. The French marshal was ordered by Napoleon to march on Namur and Liege. Blucher, however, retired on Wavre. When the distant thunder of the guns at Waterloo was heard, Gerard, Exelmans and Vandamme besought Grouchy to bear to the left and succour the Emperor. But he refused their requests, showing them, says Louvet, the fresh orders he had received. This was on the morning of the 18th, but still he waited and waited, just as he had done when he dawdled away a precious week in Bantry Bay. At last, between four and five p.m., another letter came recalling him to the right of Napoleon's position, but it was then too late, for the Prussian cannon balls were already doing their deadly work, and the Emperor's army had to show two fronts. Well might Napoleon bitterly exclaim, "À Waterloo, Grouchy s'est perdu."

Far otherwise did Nelson act on two memorable occasions, and the first of these was in a maritime conflict, the vital importance of which has never been rightly appreciated, except by some historians or experts in naval matters. Just consider for a moment the position of England in 1797. "France was without an enemy on the Continent, and England without an ally." The war was pressing heavily upon us. The fleet was mutinous, and both at the Nore and Spithead the crews hoisted the black flag, and left the coasts open to French attack. The blundering neglect of the government and permanent officials had nearly lost Ireland, and now with the loyalty of her seamen momentarily gone, the fate of England seemed indeed trembling in the balance. Never, indeed, had the outlook been so desperate since those ignominious times, when London heard the Dutch guns in the Thames. Happily the sailors returned to their sense of duty, and were soon ready to go anywhere or dare anything. And they had able leaders who struck hard whilst the politicians were scheming and clamouring. It was time, indeed, for at this crisis the enemy had to be watched at Cadiz, Brest, Toulon and Antwerp. If the Dutch, French and Spanish fleets

could once unite, their superiority would be overwhelming, and our command of the sea gone. That was the pressing danger, as our admirals rightly understood it; and right well did they confront it. Duncan beat Winter off Camperdown, and Jarvis smote the Dons off Cape St. Vincent, and the proposed combination went to the four winds, or the bottom of the ocean. It was at St. Vincent that Nelson—then only thirty-eight, although he had seen six-score actions—so distinguished himself by his glorious disobedience. Jarvis had an inferior force, but decided at all costs to stop the Spaniards from Cadiz joining the French at Brest. He succeeded in driving the foe helter skelter back to port, and to this grand *strategic* result, Nelson's celebrated disregard of his chief's orders mainly contributed, a matter of far greater influence for the preservation of our sea power than the hero's capture of the San Joseph, with which, in the popular mind, he is so much identified. Indeed, a well-known French writer thus sums up the victory. "The moral effect was immense. Europe struck with astonishment understood that numbers were of no avail against the maritime skill and courage of the English."

Nelson's flat disobedience to Lord Keith in 1799 we may pass over as more an incident of his connection with Lady Hamilton than an occurrence of war, but it may be mentioned that his amorous dalliance about between Sicily and Naples, when he should have been protecting Minorca, according to orders, was not altogether passed over by government, and Suvarof, the great Russian general, wrote to him very frankly about it from Prague. It was at Copenhagen in 1801, that Nelson's most historic act of disobedience occurred, although it is pretty certain that he had at the time private instructions to act on his own responsibility if he thought fit. He had tried to induce Parker to leave the Danes and Swedes in his rear and destroy the Russian fleet, then ice-bound at Revel; but Parker did not dare attempt such strategy. So in the last days of March, Nelson examined the approaches to Copenhagen, and surveyed its defences. On April 1st, he attacked the Danes at ten a.m., the fire of the enemy from ships, forts, and floating batteries being tremendous. At one p.m., Parker, distant some miles away with the main body of the armament, hoisted the signal to discontinue fighting. Nelson at once ordered his division into closer action, and grappling with the gallant Danes muzzle to muzzle and yard-arm to

yard-arm, won the bloodiest conflict of his glorious career. The extent of the awful havoc may be imagined, when it is stated that the Danish flagship had nearly every man on board killed or wounded. She drifted away, and like the Orient of the Nile, blew up. Despite the story about Parker having privately allowed Nelson a free hand, it is beyond doubt that they were very much at cross purposes, and perhaps as a consequence, Parker was recalled and Nelson appointed in his place. On the other hand, *the latter never received any official recognition for the victory.*

It was by such exploits as these that Nelson attained to that pinnacle of fame which, as the writer of a recent review in Macmillan remarks, he alone occupies among the crowd of heroes of ocean warfare. The statement however that Nelson is the only admiral we can class with great generals like Belisarius, Gonsalvo de Cordova, Turenne, Marlborough and Wellington, invites an unfair contrast, for one is apt to forget that the science of war on land had made great strides ages before the invention of the mariner's compass, and such naval combinations as were planned in the Napoleonic period, were impossible before navigation had outgrown its infancy. In a word the progress of maritime discovery and the development of naval construction are essentially features of modern history entirely undreamed of in those long vanished centuries which witnessed the wonderful strategy of Alexander, Hannibal, or Cæsar. The combination of movements by powerful fleets to command the ocean was necessarily an unknown factor in war so long as the ocean itself was unknown.

It is also strangely rash to say "sea warfare is to war on land what draughts is to chess." Considering that the world has not yet beheld a struggle for maritime supremacy under strictly modern conditions, the critic is hardly able to guess even faintly the possibilities of such a complicated game as naval war of the future. He goes on to speak of Nelson's contemporary, Howe, as "ruining the hide bound traditions of the line of battle when he broke through the enemy." Rodney had done this long before at St. Lucia, but it is perhaps more to our point to leave the reviewer alone, and to note with satisfaction that all three alike, Rodney, Howe, and Nelson were rewarded for their disobedience to old-fashioned precepts by glorious triumphs.

A remarkable instance of unhesitating acceptance of risky re-

sponsibility, in spite of all the drags which boards of directors or their political agents could employ, was shown when General Charles James Napier conquered and annexed Scinde in 1843. The dawdlers and the advocates of a policy of letting events shape themselves could only expect this energy from a man with such a record as Napier's, but the controversy it aroused, although almost forgotten except by old Anglo-Indians, was a furious one in its day. When a lad of sixteen Napier had helped his father to hold their Irish home against the rebels of '98. At Corunna he received five wounds and again at Busaco he got a bullet through the jaw. After being invalided for five months he rode ninety miles at one stretch, and on one horse in order to take his place again in the front. And yet after all this experience of sheer hard campaigning he went as a student to the military college at Farnham and probably regarded as a practical holiday, a short break in his book-work during which he managed to take a share in the Hundred Days and figure at the storming of Cambrai. In '42 he found himself in command on the Scinde frontier. Outram reported from Haiderabad that all looked peaceful at the very moment when Napier knew the Ameers meant war. They had been excited by our disasters in Afghanistan, and the Scinde troubles were, to use Napier's expression, "the tail of the Afghan war." He knew the enemy numbered at least 50,000 against his couple of thousand, and it behoved him to set his camp in the best order. This he swiftly set about, and his proclamation anent some young officers who rode recklessly about the bazaars is characteristic. "Gentlemen as well as beggars may ride to the devil when they get on horseback, but neither gentlemen nor beggars have the right to send other people to the devil." He continued to hearken to his political adviser, Outram, so long as it seemed safe, and then with lightning-like rapidity he acted for himself. With 700 men on camels (two on each), a couple of cannon, and two hundred cavalry, he plunged into the Scinde Desert, and in a week arrived at Imamghar the famous stronghold of the Ameers. The fortress was blown up, and then followed the splendid victories of Haiderabad and Dubba. Next came the memorable annexation. But if in all this Napier acted in opposition to his political adviser he well knew like Nelson how to fill his own followers with a spirit of unflinching obedience. At the battle of Haiderabad he

noticed a gap in a long wall facing his right front. He sent Captain Tew with one gun and a company to the opening and told him to die there. Tew seized and blocked the gap, paralysed the Baluchis, and died like a hero. Napier had crossed his Rubicon and been triumphant, but his laconic message "*Peccavi* (I have sinned, *i.e.* Scinde) was not forgotten by the directors, and when they went, on receipt of the news of the terrible battle of Chillianwallah, cap in hand to the old Duke of Wellington, and asked him to name a commander, only took his advice and appointed Napier of Scinde with the greatest reluctance.

Such men as Napier were never shirkers when a momentous decision had to be taken and acted on, nor is the type, thank heaven, by any means extinct. Many can still remember when there were thousands of highly respectable sickly sentimentalists who would gladly have gone to see Governor Eyre end his career like Governor Wall outside Newgate, because in saving Jamaica he had hanged a black preacher. The late Major "Roddy" Owen too went literally counter to government injunctions when he made his bold dash to Wadelai, and running the gauntlet of Arab musketry for mile after mile, secured the valley of the Upper Nile for England. He saw his chance, and was struck with the same patriotic decision and energy which had in a previous case prompted another gallant officer to swiftly annex the Isle of Perim just in the very nick of time. Finally one cannot help recalling the memory of Gordon of Khartoum, of whom Mr. Boulger says in his recently published biography, "He would do things in his own way in defiance of diplomatic timidity or official rigidity." It is said with justice that the history of our nation is taught in a wretched manner in our schools as a mere chronology of "battle, murder, and sudden death," but what would our boys think of it if we glossed over the lives of the Raleighs, and Nelsons, and Napiers, and offered them in exchange the stirring details of the personalities of so many little Englanders?

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# A Daughter of Babylon.

IN TWO PARTS.

By C. HORNBY.

## PART TWO.

### CHAPTER III.

IN THE TOILS.

KATHERINE FARNHAM sat alone on the grassy plot, near the ruins of the old fort, beside her lay her paint box and on her knees she held a small sketching block, over which she was bending, intent upon her work ; in one hand she held a large red sunshade, which had to be put down every time her brush wanted fresh colour. Miss Farnham looked up with a smile as Dorian came down the steep rocky path towards her ; he was walking quicker than he usually did, jumping over the stones in a most active manner.

He had known Katherine Farnham exactly a week, but a week in a dull hotel amid lovely scenery is longer than an ordinary one spent elsewhere. People become acquainted sooner beneath one roof in a very small Italian town, than under ordinary circumstances. It is not to be wondered at therefore, that when somebody turns up to whom they can speak without pointing and uplifting eyebrows, that the acquaintance thrives, and a friendship of a week is equal to that of a year anywhere else.

Dorian, as I have already said, hurried down the pathway, and threw himself down beside Katherine, and began playing with the contents of her paint box.

"How well you paint," he said, because it was the first thing that came into his head. "Is that the hotel?" he put out one finger to point, missed his aim, causing his cuff to smudge the building in question.

"Oh! look, you have spoilt it," cried Katherine piteously, surveying the smudge ruefully with a contraction of her pretty brows.

"Oh! I am so sorry, what a clumsy fool I am, I have spoilt it after all your trouble, and all because of that confounded hotel." Norrys' face expressed something more than mere concern.



"It does not matter; it is really of no consequence," said Katherine sweetly (how many thousands of people say the same thing when they feel inclined to vent their wrath on the offender in a very different way!) Not that Katherine felt so towards Dorian, she rather enjoyed hearing the apologies, and the delightfully angry way in which he blamed himself, so she flushed prettily, painted over the smudge, and smiled at him, saying for the fiftieth time that it did not matter, that she had intended to destroy it any how, it was so badly done.

He grew comforted at her repeated assurances, and watched her white fingers as they deftly handled the brush. Dorian could not have been called a flirt, and Katherine was disappointed if she expected him to utter pretty speeches; he had never had the opportunity of being one, he did not take any particular pleasure in the little game, because once and only once he had been vanquished in it; he had thought that he could amuse himself, and found that it was not he who was flirting, but somebody else that was flirting with him, which was a different matter altogether. He did not take enough interest in the human race to make a pastime of it, and was naturally angry to find that other people did, and that he, instead of victimizing as he fondly believed was the case—happened himself to be the victim.

After all, what is a man, clever though he be, in the toils of a pretty woman? He may flirt with her, it is true, and perhaps for a time his own conceit will carry him through a great deal, but in the end she will surely triumph. Of course I am not speaking of every woman, for some can neither attract attention, nor, when they receive it, know how to take it as it is meant, but flounder hopelessly in a sea of entanglement and misunderstanding. But a woman with beauty, wit, and eyesight, with the knowledge of the use of each, surely she is far more clever, more subtle, more deceiving, more finished in the art of deceit, of scheming—of moving heaven and earth for the success of her plans—than any one man on the face of the earth.

It never occurred to Dorian that Katherine might be a flirt, simply because he liked her and did not wish to think so, and for another reason, he had never been thrown in with young ladies of her type. The somebody who had played in that deadly little game with him, had not resembled Katherine in anything, excepting character,

therefore it never entered Dorian's head that she should be like her at all. He fought shy of Vere Lorimer, because somehow her frank grey eyes reminded him vividly of another pair of grey eyes that had played anything but frankly with him. So now he found himself continually on the look out for the red sunshade and the golden head that it shaded.

"You really must let me hold that for you," he said at last, taking as he spoke, the sunshade from her hand, which entailed his moving a little nearer to prevent the sun from shining on her paper.

Miss Farnham relinquished it readily, "That is much better," she observed, "my work will get on faster now, without that horrid thing." So Dorian held the sunshade, and Katherine painted, now and then pausing to survey her handiwork, and asking Dorian's opinion as to whether the church tower was quite straight, or the sea too blue, and the olives the exact shade of green. Occasionally Norrys made suggestions, but on the whole agreed that it was quite lovely.

"I almost wish I knew how to paint," he said, as his eye wandered over the blue rippling bay and the wooded mountains. "I should like my mother to have a picture of this lovely view, but a photograph never does justice to scenery, although it very often considerably improves mankind."

"It would give me the greatest pleasure to paint her a few little sketches, if you really think she would like it, only I paint so badly," Katherine answered readily.

"Would you really? My mother would be delighted, to say nothing of me," Dorian returned with real gratitude in his tone.

"Very well then," said Katherine softly, "I shall begin at once, but they will be for you too, to remind you of—of these—of this week—which I at least have enjoyed so much!" She played her magnificent blue eyes up and down his face, the whole of her lovely features radiant with swift sweet smiles.

Dorian felt dazzled, as Katherine meant that he should; almost unknowingly he put out his hand until it rested on hers.

"I too have enjoyed it, why leave me out, why cannot it last longer—for ever?" Even his mellow baritone fell almost to a whisper. Katherine could hardly conceal her satisfaction, her smiles had not been altogether wasted after all.

"Nothing lasts for ever, Mr. Dorian, every thing must come to an

end—unfortunately for the nice things. But you were saying you would like to be able to paint, I am very glad you cannot. I hold artists in contempt, they are always in brown velveteens, a thing I detest for a man; they wear long hair and drooping moustaches. Oh! artists are detestable," she made a little grimace as she spoke, that caused Norrys to feel devoutly thankful that he had not been endowed with artistic talents. Henceforth he would look upon all artists as beings apart, not to be tolerated for a moment, and this was the man that cared not for the fairer sex, he who would have laughed to scorn anyone who dared to tell him that he was in love with Katherine Farnham.

"If you do paint something for my mother, it is only fair that I should take upon myself the privilege of holding aloft the red ensign," remarked Norrys, waving the article in question about somewhat wildly in the air.

"Yes, I must find out what view Mrs. Dorian would like; why, here she is, I do declare. I thought she never went out without you," cried Katherine, as the Bath-chair with Vere Lorimer behind it, appeared on the road above them.

"So did I," said Dorian, more surprised than he cared to own; that anyone should take his place behind his mother's chair was unheard of, and that it should be Vere Lorimer too—he would rather it had been Katherine.

"Why, mother, this is a surprise!" he said, as they came up the steep path. "Miss Lorimer, surely you must be tired: you must allow me to take your place at once." But Vere demurred.

"I am quite well able to do it, Mr. Dorian, thank you; indeed you shall not," as Dorian put his hand on the handle, "that is unless your mother would rather."

"No, indeed!" said the invalid decidedly, "she does it very nicely, Norrys, I feel quite independent of you already." Dorian stepped back at once.

"Where is Katherine?" asked Mrs. Lorimer. She was walking beside the chair, and now it suddenly occurred to her that her niece had been absent some time.

"She is sketching below," returned Dorian, and as he spoke he glanced at his mother. A frown, half pettish, half impatient, wrinkled the invalid's brow, and for the first time it occurred to Dorian that his mother did not like Miss Farnham.

## CHAPTER IV.

## DRIVEN TO BAY.

WHEN Dorian took his place at the table d'hôte that evening he became aware that a new comer sat opposite him—next to Katherine Farnham—and somehow he felt put out that the stranger should sit next her, because, besides belonging to the male sex, he was decidedly good-looking—an Italian evidently; one could hardly have mistaken him for anything else. The rather small, well-cut features, clear olive-tinted skin, and large, wide, slightly deep-set brown eyes, golden in some lights, black in others, unmistakably betrayed his nationality. A heavy, dark, drooping moustache concealed the one bad feature of his face, namely, the rather weak and decidedly ill-tempered mouth. Dorian felt he would be not only a dangerous but an unpleasant rival to have; and he watched him narrowly as Katherine came swiftly down the room, her silk skirt rustling, her white arms bare, her lovely face looking still more beautiful, if possible, by the mellow lamp-light. Was it his fancy, he wondered, or did she give a little start of surprise as she took her seat and her quick, blue eyes ran quickly over the face of the stranger?

"There is one thing," thought Norrys, a slight smile of satisfaction circling his lip, "she can't speak a word of Italian, and he probably does not understand English." But he was destined to disappointment, for even as the thought crossed his mind the dark stranger turned his deep, melancholy eyes on Katherine, and in good, although rather stilted, English asked if she would mind passing him the salt—this was the beginning of their conversation.

The noise made by the clatter of knives and forks, to say nothing of the Germans, prevented Dorian from hearing what they were conversing about, but every now and then a word or two reached him. Yes, they were talking about music, that was clear, also painting. Could he believe his ears, Katherine was praising artists.

"Yes," he heard her say, as a lull came for a minute from the rest of the table; "yes, I do so like to see a man sketching on a warm day; it shows he has something else to interest him besides cigars, and whiskey, and sodas."

Here the conversation was lost amidst others, but once Dorian

heard Katherine's voice exclaim : " Oh, how nice ; yes, I go every morning to the Old Fort, perhaps——." Here a plate fell to the floor with a clatter, and he heard no more. Dorian ate his dinner silently, for his mother was chatting away to Mrs. Lorimer, and Vere appeared engrossed by her next neighbour, a fat old German lady, who talked away excitedly in broken English.

Norrys felt out of temper. The roast beef was uneatable, the chicken all legs, and as for the pastry, why, one might as well eat boot leather at once. How beastly hot the room was becoming too, the light so bad, and the oil smelt horrible ; why could they not have decent hotels, and what was more, decent people in them, it was abominable ; you meet all sorts of people abroad, pick-pockets, and swindlers, especially in Italy. Bah ! he had no patience with it all. Why, that fellow opposite might be an escaped convict, for all the innocent girl beside him knew ; he wondered that Mrs. Lorimer did not interfere, but some people were so careless. So ran Dorian's thoughts, and when they rose from the table he was in anything but a pleasant temper.

As he passed through the hall a letter lying on the table attracted his attention ; on looking at it he perceived that it was addressed to " Conte Francesco Riccino," and a minute afterwards Dorian saw the dark stranger take up the letter on his way to the smoking-room, and presently come out, and passing down the steps disappear into the darkness outside. Almost as he did so somebody came swiftly down the stairs, and as Dorian moved to one side he came face to face with Katherine. She had thrown a cloak over her thin evening blouse, and appeared to be just going out. By an almost irresistible impulse Dorian stepped quickly before her, completely barring her way. On seeing him she started nervously, while a vivid colour swept over her face.

" Oh ! it is you," she said, with a hurried catch in her breath.

" Yes, it most certainly is ; can I do anything for you ? " returned Dorian, his grey eyes regarding her sternly and searchingly from beneath the straight dark brows, which were contracted sharply together.

" No, oh ! no. I am only going out to get a breath of air ; it is such a perfect night, is it not ? " Katherine had recovered herself somewhat, although, had Dorian but known it, she was trembling all over.

"You are not going out alone, and at this time of night?" he asked, quickly, without moving out of her way.

"Yes, and why not, pray? Anyhow, it is not for you to question me; please let me pass."

A flash of sudden passion lighted up the girl's eyes. Dorian moved back a step, but his eyes seemed to hold her. "Katherine, only one word," but she started as if terror-struck, while a deadly pallor spread itself over her face.

"Leave me, you shall not detain me a moment longer," she said, speaking in a low, constrained tone; and for another minute Dorian stood motionless, then turned and entered his mother's room.

Meanwhile, Katherine half ran, half walked along the narrow stone-paved street, until she had left the walls on either side and reached the broad deserted Cornichi road. There was a worried and almost angry expression in her flashing blue eyes, while a hot colour flooded her face and brow; she wore no hat, and the night breeze blew her golden hair until it framed her face in a sort of halo.

"At last! I thought you were never coming," said a voice quite near, and Conte Francesco Riccino came suddenly out of the shadow and joined her.

"It was all I could do to get here," said Katherine, in a voice that was half sullen, half weary; the colour had faded from her cheeks, and her fresh beautiful face looked suddenly pale and worn, but the feverish light still burnt in her eyes, and again the nervous trembling overtook her. "Why will you not leave me alone? Why did you follow me here? It was all I could do to keep up a conversation at dinner, the strain was awful," she went on, hurriedly, her blue eyes restlessly scanning the face of the man before her.

"I thought you would not be over pleased to see me, that is partly the reason of my coming, but I also do not choose that my wife—my wife, mind you—shall flirt with everyone she meets."

Katherine's face blanched and looked ghastly in the cold wan light of the moon, which was bathing all in a silvery mantle.

"I suppose you have forgotten the fact that you are no longer free to play with the affections of every stranger," he continued, "but, unfortunately for me perhaps, I cannot forget that you belong to me, for better for worse, for richer for poor."

His voice was singularly calm and collected for one of his fiery

temperament, but it was only the calmness of fierce passion before it bursts its bonds, before all control is lost. Riccino was doing his best to curb himself, because in a sort of wild mad way he did love this fair-haired, blue-eyed English girl, and he was sorry for anyone when his temper really got the better of him.

"I have not been playing with anyone, as you call it, I never do; I——" Katherine broke off from sheer inability to proceed further; she was trembling so violently that she would have fallen, had not Riccino caught her and held her firmly, against her will.

"You may as well make up your mind to listen to what I have to say," he went on, still in the same quiet, steady tone. "Do you remember that day in Rome, in the church of Santa Margaritta, when the padre was so old and infirm that he could hardly read the marriage service, or join our hands together?"

Here Katherine shivered.

"Or join our hands together," repeated Riccino. "Our hands, our hearts, as I fondly believed then, were joined however, and we were man and wife. Do you still remember the vestry? I do; it was a small, bare room. I can see you now as you looked then, in your white cotton summer dress, and large white hat with the drooping feather that fell over your yellow hair; and I, poor deluded fool that I was, thought you were the most beautiful creature that God ever made. I remember how your eyes sparkled, and how the colour came into your cheeks, and how——" here his voice grew hoarse, and a slight trembling ran through it—"and how you came up to me and laid your head, your lovely golden head on my breast, and said, while your blue eyes looked into mine: 'Francesco, I love you, I am yours now for ever, remember, for ever,' those were your very words, they are written on my heart. Have you remembered, Katherine? Answer me. Have you remembered?"

He almost threw her from him as he uttered the last word, every feature of his white, haggard face worked convulsively, and his dark eyes seemed to burn into hers.

"It's a lie, a cruel lie; oh! it is cruel, cruel of you," cried Katherine hysterically. "I never loved you, and—and—I hate—hate and loathe you now."

The very sight of her agonized, beautiful, fair face, seemed to goad him to desperation; with one bound he caught her in his arms, and held her white slender wrists in a vice-like clasp.



"You do, do you, you vile, heartless woman, with your fair face and black soul; very well then, hate me as you will, I will have none of you, but the whole world shall know of your sin, your children shall, one day, blush for their golden haired angel of a mother, but by — you shall not escape me; this very night you leave this place with me. Who should be a more fit companion for you than your own lawful husband? Do you hear? Go back to the hotel, pack what you want, and I will wait for you." Riccino loosened the clasp of his arms, and with a low moan, Katherine fell to the ground, a shapeless mass of tumbled clothes, but the moon still shone on her golden hair, and it glittered like burnished gold.

"Not to-night, oh! not to-night," came faintly at last.

"And why, pray; you have not yet finished with that luckless Englishman, I suppose?" said Riccino savagely. "But very well, you shall not go to-night, on second thoughts it is best not. I will give you a week—not a minute over; and in the meantime I will watch you as a cat watches a mouse; but in a week's time, whether you like it or not, you will leave this place with me." And Katherine knew that he meant what he said. One more effort she made, but only one.

"And suppose I refuse, suppose I will not go with you?" she faltered unsteadily.

"Then I shall go to your aunt and claim you openly, and the news of your clandestine marriage will be all over England, and your name will be bandied from mouth to mouth," and without another word Riccino turned and vanished in the darkness, leaving Katherine to find her way back to the hotel as best she might.

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## CHAPTER V.

### IL DIAVOLO.

MRS. LORIMER was energetic; she was one of those wiry little women who can stand any amount of exertion without being in the least over-done; her bright, deep set eyes saw everything, and her tongue often ran away with her; but then she was exactly the sort of person to travel with, as she never grumbled at small worries, and could put up cheerfully with any amount of inconvenience. It was she who planned the excursion up to Ruta, a village situated on the

ridge of the mountains, and having a most lovely view of the whole coast line as far as Genoa; while at the back stretched the bare, and sometimes snow-clad peaks of the Appennines. Riccino was to be of the party. Dorian felt ridiculously annoyed when he heard it; for a minute he said angrily to himself that he would not go, but soon dismissed that thought as absurd.

On the appointed day two carriages drove up to the hotel door, a landau which held four, and a one horse victoria with only two seats. While Dorian was helping his mother into the former, Katherine ran down the hotel steps followed by Riccino, and, without a word between them, both got into the victoria.

A quick frown gathered on Dorian's brow; somehow the very sight of Katherine in her neat tailor-made gown, her golden hair glittering beneath the narrow brim of her straw hat, irritated him beyond measure, he did not glance in her direction again, but stood silently holding open the carriage door, while Mrs. Lorimer and Vere got in, and then took the vacant place on the front seat beside Vere. The girl wondered secretly at her companion, wondered at his silence and abstracted expression, but she made no remark and silently gazed at the view, while her mother and the invalid chatted together, and Dorian seemed completely absorbed in contemplation of his walking stick.

On went the carriage, the victoria bowling along in front; still, neither Vere nor Dorian broke the silence.

"I am afraid I am an exceedingly dull companion, Miss Lorimer," he said at length. "But I know so very little about this part of the world that I shan't be able to afford you much information."

"Oh, no! don't bother to talk, please," began Vere abruptly, and then she suddenly became aware that she had said an extremely foolish thing, and flushed hotly as she met the gaze of Dorian's earnest grey eyes. But he did not answer; he did not even hear what she had said, simply because he was listening feverishly to Katherine's clear, ringing laugh in the distance.

At last the drive was ended, their destination was reached and they alighted at the hotel entrance. Mrs. Lorimer, followed by Vere, went in to order tea to be ready when they came back from their explorations, and Dorian went quickly up to Katherine, who was leaning in a desultory fashion against the carriage door.

"Miss Farnham," his voice was low and constrained, "I hear the

view is very fine from that clump of pines over there. Will you walk with me, or are you tired?"

"Tired? what an idea," said Katherine, gaily. "Yes, I should love to come, I daresay the others will follow." So the two walked off, and Riccino stood watching their retreating figures with a queer expression on his dark features.

"Il Diavolo," he murmured under his breath.

Katherine, in spite of her ready acquiescence to accompany him, avoided the steady, searching gaze of his eyes, and for a few minutes all her powers of conversation absolutely forsook her; she could find nothing to say to that tall figure at her side. And Dorian, too, was silent, busily intent on digging holes in the ground with his stick. At length Katherine broke the silence by a nervous little cough; she felt shaken and unstrung, and this silence was unbearable.

"You seem lost in thought," she said sharply, "and are anything but an amusing companion."

"No, I do not feel particularly lively," returned Dorian, with a sort of determination to be as disagreeable as he could.

"That means you are depressed, I suppose?" She tried to make her voice sound indifferent, but it was such a miserable failure that Norrys turned abruptly and confronted her.

"Katherine, what is the matter? Tell me, for I will know."

"Matter! What could be the matter? Nothing at all." With an effort she forced herself to speak naturally, and smiled one of her usual brilliant smiles, while her blue eyes sought his coquettishly, but with more expression than she had any idea of.

"Then what are you doing? Are you trying to wreck two lives; do you enjoy seeing me miserable?"

Dorian turned towards her, his face drawn and stern with mingled pain and anger. Katherine felt that he must read her very soul, she recoiled a pace, but he took her hand and held it tightly.

"Tell me once for all, which do you love—that fellow," with a backward jerk of his head, "that fellow or me? Come; you shall choose once and for all. Do you understand what I say? I am in earnest."

She hardly needed words to let her know that he was indeed in earnest, and Katherine was frightened; this was not the sort of love-making she liked, and besides, supposing—she glanced nervously

round—if *he* should come. Dorian's stern, unflinching gaze was becoming unbearable, and her hand ached in his vice-like grip.

"Let me go," she said, her voice as steady as she could make it. "You have no right to question me like this, one might think I had really been guilty of encouraging you."

"And what else have you been doing all these days?" Have you not led me to think that my attentions were not disagreeable to you, have you not given me just cause to let me think you cared for me? You will probably deny that, but it is the truth."

"I do deny it, it is shameful. How dare you speak to me so? Let me go, let me go at once." Her voice rose almost to a cry, and a ghastly shade overspread her face. Dorian drew back with an involuntary exclamation of surprise, just as Riccino and Mrs. Lorimer turned the corner of the path.

The rest of the day passed uneventfully, neither Dorian or Katherine spoke to each other; if anyone noticed their silence, no remark was made, and on their homeward drive Dorian accompanied Mrs. Lorimer in the victoria, and to tell the truth he was not sorry to escape the necessity of sitting opposite Katherine in the landau, and to feel his mother's inquisitive gaze bent on him. It was a relief to be able to sit back and let somebody else do the talking, while they rattled down the hard, white road, with its fringe of olive trees; the sea blue and calm beneath them, the setting sun shedding a soft yellow radiance over all.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### A TERRIBLE PARTING.

"MISS LORIMER can I speak to you."

Dorian stood in the doorway of the salon, his face grey and haggard. Vere rose quickly, and put down her book. It was a little after nine o'clock on the evening of the next day, and most of the occupants of the hotel were congregated in the public salon, either reading, writing, or working. Dorian saw that Katherine and Riccino were sitting side by side on the sofa, apparently engrossed with each other; but he felt no pang of jealousy just then; his eyes sought Vere's, and there was a deep indescribable anguish in them.

"Yes, what is it?" asked Vere, shocked by the deathly paleness and rigidity of his face.

"My mother has one of her bad attacks, she will sink under it. I have always known she must sooner or later, but she would like to see you." He spoke slowly, in strange, quiet, distinct tones. The colour faded from the girl's face, and her clear eyes grew wide with horror:

"Oh! no," she said, with a little catch in her breath. "Oh! no surely it is not as bad as that! Indeed, I will come at once," and she followed him along the dimly lighted passage without another word, until the door of Mrs. Dorian's room was reached, and then Dorian laid his hand on her arm as she would have entered.

"Don't be frightened, but she is terribly altered; you know it is her heart; are you ready? shall we go in?"

Vere nodded assent; but her heart beat with a sort of undefined fear. Mrs. Dorian lay on her bed fully dressed, with simply a railway rug thrown over her, but her face had altered indeed.

Vere drew a quick gasping breath that made Dorian look at her hastily and take her little cold hand in his, and gently lead her up to the bedside. For a minute the two stood looking down on the motionless, almost lifeless form beneath the rug: the thin delicate face of the sick woman was tinged with a ghastly ashen pallor, the cheeks seemed to have sunk in like those of an old woman, leaving deep lines and hollows, while her fair flaxen hair had turned nearly white; there was something almost unearthly in that shrunken wizened face.

"Mother she is here, I have brought her to see you." Dorian spoke in a low, soft voice, full of inexpressible sorrow and sweetness. Mrs. Dorian moved slightly, and gave a faint groan of pain as she did so.

"Vere, my dear—dear child, I am dying," her voice sounded far away, so thin and weak had it grown.

"Oh! no, dear Mrs. Dorian, don't, don't say that," cried the girl, with a sort of shocked pain filling her young voice, "you will get better, indeed you will."

"No, I shall not get better this time," the invalid's voice rose a little: "Vere, my child, you have been very good—to—" then her heavy yellow lids lifted suddenly, disclosing bulged and widely extended pupils.

"Oh! oh! Norrys, the pain, the pain—I can't bear it, help me, help me!" she shrieked, rising from her pillows and throwing both her arms out towards him. Without a word he folded his arms around her, and then there was silence. The sick woman lay battling with the frightful pain, her face growing greyer every minute, while Dorian, his strong face set in iron, held her—his dark brows closely knitted, his lips compressed in rigid lines. As for Vere, the girl hardly dared to breathe: her hand clutched tightly at the iron bed post, her large grey eyes extended with awe and horror.

At last Mrs. Dorian seemed to rally, as the pain subsided her hands relaxed their hold, and with a sigh she fell back on her pillow. "Quick," she said drawing Dorian towards her, "Quick, before it comes again. Norrys, listen to me, a dying woman; have no faith in her you love. Yes, I know, but she is false—false—" here her strength failed her, and with a little gasp she fell back, and for the minute Vere thought all was over. But gradually consciousness returned, and this time her drawn haggard eyes sought Vere's.

"My dear," she said, motioning Dorian away, "Be kind to him, he will have no one when—when I'm gone, promise me, promise me to be good to him—my boy—don't—don't let her," Mrs. Dorian paused, and Dorian took the girl's arm and pulled her gently away.

"You had better not stay," he said kindly, "It is too much for you," but she shook her head.

"I will stay as long as she wants me," and just then Mrs. Dorian beckoned her to come closer:

"You have not promised me, Vere," she faltered in a low pitifully weak voice, and Vere promised, while her slender figure shook, and a mist rose before her eyes, blinding out everything.

All through that long miserable night the girl sat beside the bed, her hand locked in that of the sick woman. Daylight came at last. Soon the sun, the bright radiant Italian sun would be shining down upon the little bay, fluttering in between the window blinds with a mocking dazzling light. Dorian went to the window, and pressed his brown cheek against the pane. Outside the blue waters danced and sparkled: inside all was grey gloom. Day had dawned, and with it came the hum of life: aboard the fishing smacks the lateen sails were being hoisted, mules were being harnessed for their day's work, voices began to be heard through the clear morning air.

Dorian turned away and his gaze met that of Vere's; the look in her grey eyes went to his heart, so full was it of a sort of dumb misery and entreaty: her hand was still clasped in his mother's, she was chained to her post.

"You are tired. Oh! you must be very tired?" he began full of remorse, as he noted afresh her pale cheeks and the weary droop of her head.

"No, only a little, you have had no sleep at all either," she said gently.

"I am sorry for you, oh! so sorry," she held out her other hand with a gesture of sympathy, that touched him strangely for a moment. At last Vere was released, and as she stole away to get the food and rest of which she was so sorely in need, Dorian fell on his knees beside the bed: how long he knelt he hardly knew.

He did not look up as Vere entered some hours later; the girl paused, awe struck on the threshold, not daring to intrude on his great sorrow. Could she but have comforted him! If she could only have helped him to bear his pain! Then she thought of Katherine, how much better if it had been her, she would have been able to comfort him surely—because—because—he loved her so.

"Is that you? Yes! she is still unconscious," said Dorian rising and answering her unspoken question. "Won't you sit here, I am afraid I have taken your place." He moved away, but Vere interposed:

"Oh! stay there please, but first of all may I not get you something—some hot coffee, you will be worn out, oh! please let me?" She looked up in his face, with passionate sorrow and longing in her eyes, but Dorian shook his head.

"I want nothing, thank you; it will soon be over now."

"Soon over, what do you mean?" faltered Vere.

"I mean that she can't last much longer, like that, soon her pain will be over, she is sinking fast, can you not see?" and Vere as she glanced at the bed, felt that it would be better so. She did not speak, but her eyes filled with tears and her lips quivered, not so much on account of the dying woman, but because Dorian's stern despairing face broke her heart, there was a sort of dumb animal pain in his deep earnest eyes.

"Norrys!" Mrs. Dorian's voice broke the stillness.

"Mother!"



Dorian was bending over her, his lips against her cheek. "Is the pain better now, dear," he said gently, but almost as he spoke, the grey death tint spread over the worn face :

"It—it has come again ; I am dying, no, don't look like that my poor boy," then turning to Vere : "Dear, I saw you although I could not speak, you have been very good to me child, oh !" A piercing shiek rang through the room : "The pain, Norrys, the pain," faltered the dying woman.

"Yes, mother, I am here, I will not leave you," he said soothingly. He took her frail body in his strong arms, and held her against his breast ; while every minute her face grew more livid, until the ashen hue of death came over it.

"Vere"—Dorian still had thought for the trembling girl—"go, this is no place for you, do you hear me?" and Vere did not dare demur : she bent her curly head and pressed a fluttering little kiss on Mrs. Dorian's hand, and then she went swiftly from the room, not stopping until she reached her own boudoir, and there the long enforced calm gave way, the strain had been too much for her ; she burst into a fit of wild hysterical crying, as she threw herself on the bed.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE BITTER CUP.

MRS. DORIAN was dead, and a gloomy silence pervaded the hotel. The chambermaid moved about with noiseless footsteps, the *propriétaire* conversed in the hall in lower tones, even the waiters tried not to make too much clatter with the knives and forks, as they went in and out of the dining-room. Vere lay on her bed upstairs quite worn out, Mrs. Lorimer reclined on hers likewise, but from a different cause ; she was crying bitterly.

"Riccino" had taken advantage of the general disturbance that Mrs. Dorian's death had created, to carry off Katherine, and now all that remained of her was a note lying on the hall table directed to "N. Dorian, Esq." Dorian took it up mechanically, as the waiter handed it to him. He was not altered, because his sunburnt skin did not brook much alteration, and only the lines around his lips, which had grown harder and sterner the last few days, told that

things had not gone smoothly with him. Now he slowly opened Katherine's note, and glanced down at the large flowery characters. It was dated the same day as his mother's death, and ran as follows:—

"Dear Mr. Dorian,—

First allow me to condole with you on your poor mother's illness, may it turn out better than every one seems to expect; and secondly I think it only fair to write to you and let you know, that by the time you read this I shall be many miles away. It is unlucky perhaps for both of us that we met. But as for me, well! I have made my bed and so I must lie on it; for you it is different, you have your life before you, may I hope it will not turn out such a failure as mine has done. Perhaps we may meet hereafter. Is it a vain wish on my part that the remembrance of these last few weeks may prove as pleasant to you, as they are to me?

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

KATHERINE RICCINO."

Dorian knew as well as possible that the whole tone of this letter was cruel, but he had passed through too much lately to writhe under it, as Katherine had hoped that he would. He folded it up carefully, put it in his breast pocket and then left the hotel. Had his heart been made of stone he could hardly have felt less than he did; presently he would wake up to what had happened, but as yet no passionate anger rose in his heart against the girl who had misled and deceived him. Whatever happened now could hardly make much difference to him either way; for the time his senses were numbed as it were, nothing had power to rouse or hurt.

At last Dorian awoke to the fact that he had reached the old fort, and throwing himself down on the grass full length, he covered his eyes with his hand to shut out the glare of the sun. Below the blue water rippled lazily, and above the sky was a blue cloudless vault far as eye could reach, then suddenly Dorian remembered that the last time he had been there, Katherine had been near him; he had watched the sun shining on her golden hair, and the quick movements of her small white hand as it handled the brush. How her blue eyes had flashed and smiled at him, and he poor fool had basked happily in the sunshine of her presence, a believing, miserably believing fool. The truth seemed now to rush

upon him, he had been deceived, played with, thrown over; and his mind flew back to the Oxford days, when the whole of his boyish heart had been given to just such another. And now he had no one, his faith in women had been cruelly shaken. His mother, whom he had loved and tended for five years, was gone. In the future he might, and would, live for himself alone. The world had not dealt kindly with him; to him it seemed as though he had failed in everything, utterly failed.

How long he lay motionless on the short dry grass, he hardly knew; when he rose he had settled to leave Rapallo on the next day. He had no thought of following Katherine. His love for her—if love it was, had been sorely bruised—he could hardly have dared to see her again, he sincerely hoped he never should. Was he not jealous? A vague feeling that he ought to be possessed him, but he felt too coldly indifferent to be capable of any feeling at all.

When Mrs. Lorimer heard that he was going, she fully approved of the resolution.

"There is nothing to keep you here," she said mournfully, extending her hand. Katherine's behaviour had completely shattered her, and her brown little face looked thin and wizened.

"I thought she loved you, but alas! she is incapable of loving anyone, but how could she have done it, how could she?" It was not likely that Dorian could answer this, so he said nothing.

"And Vere, poor Vere, she is so upset. Yes, we are leaving shortly. Perhaps we may meet again one day. Good-bye Mr. Dorian, take care of yourself, for you look completely knocked up." Dorian pressed her hand, while he said earnestly—

"Good-bye, Mrs. Lorimer, please remember me to your daughter, and thank her for all she has done. I am sure she was a great comfort to my mother, yes, I hope sincerely we may meet again," and in a minute he was gone—gone from the place where his hopes had been shattered, gone from his mother's grave beneath the olive trees, and the warm soft rays of the Italian sun.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SHADOWS OF THE PAST.

It was the first day of June, a hot, cloudless, stifling day, when the sun shines down through a thick yellow haze, and the blue of the sky is obscured by the smoke-laden atmosphere. Yet London is looking its best just now: the trees and flowers in the park are refreshed after the rain, and the dust is mercifully laid in the streets. The ceaseless roar of the traffic fills the air, while the pavements are thronged with the fashionable and unfashionable crowd, and the tops of the omnibuses are crammed. Beautiful carriages, with their prancing thoroughbreds, mingle with the endless string of hansoms and four-wheelers. It is the "season," and everybody who is "anybody" is in town.

A neat, well-appointed carriage stands before one of the largest houses in Grosvenor Place, the windows and balconies of which are gay with flowers, and dainty silk and muslin curtains. Upstairs, in the large, luxurious drawing-room, seated near the open window, are two women; the heat is great even in this shaded room, but the roar of the surging life outside can only be indistinctly heard.

"By the way; have you seen Norrys Dorian? You know that he is in town, I suppose?" questioned one of the women.

Katherine Farnham is hardly recognisable—the slim girl has developed into a tall, handsome woman, more beautiful now than she ever was, but the bright vivacity that characterised her has given place to indifference. Her face is no longer that of a girl—light-hearted and careless. It is the face, now, of the cold, cruel society machine, a face embittered by suffering, scornful and hardened. Her beautiful figure is well set off in the dress of pale grey cloth, with its costly gold embroidery; the golden hair is piled in fashionable profusion beneath the large black lace hat: the sun glints on the jewels that weigh down the small, white, restless hands, and on the delicate shoes with their tiny diamond buckles.

"I did not know that Mr. Dorian was in town," returned Miss Lorimer. She is surprised, although her small, pale face shows nothing of it.

"He is very much in town, putting on lots of swagger, I daresay. He can afford it now, with his ten-thousand a year. I am rather

looking forward to meeting him again." Katherine laughs, and her blue eyes gleam dangerously.

"Are you?" says Vere; her tones are quite unconcerned, utterly indifferent.

"Well, I must be off, as I can't persuade you to come with me. Lord Northwell will be the gainer, as he will probably occupy your seat."

"He is welcome to it." Vere extended her hand, and drew up her slight figure. For a moment Katherine held the hand, and scanned the owner curiously.

"Vere, you are altered, I hardly know you," she said abruptly. "Where has all your childishness disappeared to?"

"One does not stay a child for ever," was the response, as she rose to ring the bell. Katherine did not wait, but with an airy nod swept from the room, and Vere listened to the carriage wheels until they were lost to sound.

Then she walked mechanically across the room, a small slender figure in her white Indian embroidered muslin; perhaps she had altered more than Katherine in one way, because the frank childish eyes had lost their brightness, and no longer lit up with girlish enthusiasm: they were weary, languid, and indifferent, the slight shade of purple beneath, lightened and deepened their grey depths. The lips were discontented and dissatisfied looking, the fresh roses of early girlhood had flown from her cheeks, leaving them pale. Vere was much admired, her pale face and large grey eyes were called "*spirituelle*," her languid indifference "*interesting*."

This was her second season, the second summer they had occupied the handsome house in Grosvenor Place.

"What is there to-night? Oh! I hope there is nothing on to-night," she thought wearily, and she crossed the room to the writing table, over which hung an ivory engagement card with a narrow silver rim. "Thursday!" Vere hastily ran her finger along the line; her heart sank as she read: "Ball at the Russian Embassy. Dining at Lady Castletons. Garden Party at Henley." The last had a line through it, but the other two the girl knew she was bound to attend.

Vere was still standing staring at the card, when Mrs. Lorimer rustled into the room: she looked as well as it is possible for a dragged-out society hack to look in the hottest summer weather.

"Ah! here you are, Vere, come, if we are going for a turn in the park before Mrs. Vanduleer's squash, we must hurry."

"I forgot," returned the girl, in a sort of dazed way as she put her hand to her head, and pushed back the dark hair from her forehead. In another ten minutes mother and daughter were being driven quickly along the crowded streets.

It was a little after eleven, when Vere followed her mother's lead into the large ball-room of the Russian Embassy. The heat had brought the faintest tinge of colour into her cheeks, and her grey eyes shone with more brilliancy than usual. Suddenly Mrs. Lorimer turned and touched her daughter's arm meaningly, and Vere directed her eyes to where her mother's were fixed.

Standing in the doorway of the second room stood Katherine—she looked radiantly beautiful just then, and her rich dress sparkled with diamonds. Her perfect, faultlessly featured face, was full of animation. Vere gave an involuntary start of surprise: she hardly fancied anyone could be so beautiful. Beside her stood a figure that was strange, yet perfectly familiar. Dorian, tall, handsome, self-possessed and courteous, was talking to her—darker, sterner, and more bronzed than when she had last seen him. Surely he was no longer in love with a woman who had all but jilted him, thrown him carelessly aside; and yet how beautiful, how fascinating Katherine looked now; if he had loved her two years ago surely he must love her double-fold to-night. A rush of passionate anger swept over the younger girl, a burning longing possessed her that Dorian might see her.

And he had done so, he was threading his way through the brilliant crowd, and his hand was out-stretched towards her. But Vere was angry, miserably, torturingly jealous; she hated Dorian at that moment, her pride was sorely wounded, why had he never called, never sought her out—never even written? So now, just because her heart was beating violently, because for the last two years she had been longing for Dorian, longing to hear his deep mellow voice, to see his tall figure, and deep earnest eyes, she raised her own, bright and shining, but without the slightest gleam of recognition—her face pale, every muscle quivering, her voice freezingly cold and formal, just because she could hardly force herself to speak at all.

"Surely I am not mistaken? Miss Lorimer, don't you know me."

"I—I beg your pardon. I really can't recall. Is it—are you Mr. . . . Dorian?" she raised her eyebrows slightly, just enough to express the languid indifference which she felt. Dorian stepped back, the light fading from his eyes.

"Two years is a long time certainly, Miss Lorimer, and Rapallo seems to have melted from the world. May I hope for the pleasure of a dance?" His voice was as cold and formal as hers had been now. Vere smiled, a slow curving of her lips was all it could be called.

"So sorry, not one left, so sorry, you know?" and she was whirled away by another partner, while Dorian stood transfixed from sheer astonishment. Was that the girl who had sat at his mother's bedside, that the frank child of two years ago? Stunned and bewildered he wandered out into the hall, and sought refuge in the smoking room, from the hundred smiling mammas and slangy daughters. Katherine had surprised and astonished him; he had not expected to see her, but Vere had wounded and hurt him in a way she little guessed.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### A FALSE STEP.

"YES!" Miss Lorimer was at home, so Dorian followed the powdered headed flunkey up the wide softly carpeted staircase, and into the drawing-room. But Katherine, not Vere, rose to meet him, a beautiful smiling Katherine with out-stretched hands. A slow rich colour flooded her fair skin, as she came forward to meet him.

"Ah! it is you," she said softly, and without any embarrassment: "Vere will be here presently, but perhaps you won't mind having to talk to me for a few minutes." Dorian glanced at her gravely, and it was in that steady, half contemptuous stare, that Katherine awoke to the humiliating fact that he no longer loved her.

"You were surprised to meet me the other night, were you not; you are surprised to see me now?" went on Katherine gently. "It is a long time since I saw you—it—it was when your poor mother died."

"Yes." Dorian merely assented to what she said, he made no remarks on it.



"Perhaps you wonder at my being here at all?" she questioned with a little conscious laugh.

"I have given up wondering at anything you do, I think you can hardly hope to surprise a second time." He raised his eyes and regarded her steadily.

"Surprise you, did I ever surprise you? It is so long ago now that I have quite forgotten; by the way have you seen Riccino, he is knocking about somewhere I suppose, but those highly strung men become loving after a time. I came here, he made me positively ill." Katherine glanced up at him with a half triumphant, half insolent expression in her eyes. Dorian rose—his tall figure towering above her, his quiet eyes flashing scorn and contempt, not unmixed with disgust in his voice, as he said coldly:

"I am not here to discuss your husband's merits or his shortcomings, I will call another time in the hope of seeing Miss Lormer." Never had this vain, self-opinionated woman felt smaller and more contemptible than she did then; she quailed under this man's proud disdainful eyes; every vestige of colour left her face, for the moment her self-confidence was shaken, her forces routed.

"I never asked you to," she cried hotly, forgetting her *role* for the moment, and throwing off the calm society manner; the blood rushed to her face with redoubled force, her lips quivered with rage, and burning, furious tears rose in her eyes.

"You need not look quite so contemptuous, you are not such a paragon of virtue yourself that you can look down on me, and what have I done? Did I ever, even then, ever say I loved you? It was you, poor weak fool, that were ready to throw yourself at my feet. Well! I am glad you have so successfully recovered your little *affaires de cœur*." She laughed a low disagreeable laugh.

Just then Vere entered the room. Whether Katherine knew of her entrance it would be hard to say, for with a haughty toss of her head she swept away from him, saying as she did so; "I hope you will recover your second one as easily, I am sure my poor little cousin is quite dying for you," and with a mocking laugh she was gone. For a second Dorian stood speechless, his eyes fastened fixedly on the white immovable face before him. Vere stood like a statue; with an almost super-human effort she withdrew her eyes from his, and came towards him.

"How do you do, Mr. Dorian, you have found time to come and see us, really."

Dorian knew that her self-possession was wonderful, her words were ordinary enough, but her voice vibrated a little. He bowed gravely; for the first time in his life he felt awkward and ill at ease, but there was no embarrassment about Vere now; her small pale face was as rigid and as passionless as marble, she was talking away the whole time of various things—Hurlingham, Ascot, the Countess of So and So's ball, the park, the theatres. Suddenly she stopped, perhaps something in Dorian's eyes arrested her words.

"You have seen Katherine?" she said, fixing her eyes on his face.

"Yes," and then Dorian did the very stupidest thing he could have done; rising he went up to her and suddenly took both her hands almost roughly in his.

"You think I care for her still," he said passionately "I don't, I never loved her, she's false, wicked, despicable. Do you think I could ever forget what you did, your patient devotion to my mother, Vere? Let me show my gratitude somehow! I am yours, if you will marry me?"

With a dry suppressed sob, the girl pushed him away, her small fair face flaming, her eyes gleaming and dilating with passion.

"How dare you, how dare you say such things to me? Do you suppose I would marry you, you of all people? Do you think because Katherine liked, liked being played with, that I like it too? I don't love you, you seem to think that a girl has only to see you to love you. But your conceit has led you too far, I hate you, I—hate you." She was sobbing now, choking scalding sobs of anger. How dare he, how dare he say such things to her; he who had only a moment before been flirting with Katherine, he, who thought she was in love with him. Brushing away the tears from her eyes Vere turned a pale quivering face to his.

"Go, you had better go, before you make things worse; remember for the future not to believe what you hear, there are plenty of people to love you I daresay, people like—Katherine, oh! thousands of them," and with that she rushed from the room, leaving Dorian stunned and horror-stricken at what had happened. What had he done; he hardly knew, he was too bewildered, but then even the very best of men are fools sometimes.

## CHAPTER X.

## A TWICE TOLD TALE.

JUNE had passed away, and with it, the roses, the strawberries, the budding leaves of early summer; and September had come; the golden tinted leaves were falling, and the ferns and bracken on the moor were becoming brown and copper-coloured. Needless to say the fashionable world had left London! Cowes was over, Henley and Ascot, and all who could were flying northwards, with guns and fishing lines, golf clubs and bicycles. Silks and muslins, shirt fronts, and high hats, had given place to tweeds, and serges, neat felt and sailor hats, caps and tam o'shanter.

Mrs. Lorimer and Vere had flown with the rest. Sir Richard Fanshore's house was always open to his daughter, and his dearly loved grandchild. Vere was the old man's pet, nothing was too good for this darling of his heart. "The Grange" was a delightful house to stay in, just over the Tweed, overshadowed by the Cheviots: it stood in lovely park like grounds, with the wild moorland all around.

At present Mrs. Lorimer and Vere were the only guests; on the morrow some seven or eight men were expected for the shooting, and Dorian amongst them. Vere had not known of his coming in time to prevent it, and now she hardly knew whether she was glad or not.

An hour before the arrivals were expected, Vere donned her short tweed skirt and covert coat, poised a fluffy red Tammy on the top of her brown hair, and started towards the moor with only the dogs for company. How lovely it was, the early Autumn twilight was already sending floating purple shadows across the hills—now casting all into deepest shade, now letting tiny rays of departing sunshine touch the rugged hill top, and brighten the gorse to purest gold. The keen sweet air, laden with the fragrant smell of peat, swept gently across the moor: below in the valley the river rushed along its rocky bed, its waters gleaming black as ink beneath the deep shadow of the rocks, but far in the distance curling on its way like a tiny silver streak.

Vere drunk in the pure air with the keenest delight, as she skipped lightly from tuft to tuft, where the ground grew marshy, now chasing

"Rough" the big collie, or catching up the tiny Yorkshire terrier in her arms and throwing him from her, on to the little boggy heaps, while the rest barked and scampered, enjoying it even more than their mistress. She tried to forget that Dorian was coming, was probably at that very minute driving along the high road from the station. After all he was nothing to her—and she less than nothing to him. So Vere argued with herself, and tried to feel as utterly indifferent as it was possible to feel. At last she knew she must turn, they must all have arrived by this time, and be dressing for dinner. She managed to get to her room, escaping all notice, as she ran through the open morning-room window. Perhaps Vere had never taken so long to dress before, or ever tried her maid's patience more severely as one after another her gowns were tried on and thrown aside.

"I shall not wear my white satin to-night, Margaret," she said decidedly, as she stepped out of the fourth and looked discontentedly around: "It is altogether too pronounced for dinner, and that white Indian silk is perfectly disgusting, the hem is absolutely black. I think I shall wear my old black, the one covered with lace, you know?"

"Yes, Miss," replied the long-suffering maid resignedly, "But it does seem a pity to wear the black, Miss, when the satin shows off your beautiful neck and arms so well."

"Nonsense," answered the girl sharply. "Yes! I shall wear the black."

So the old black lace gown was donned in preference to the gleaming satin, and Vere, as pale as a lily, her grey eyes shining strangely, sailed downstairs, her black lace robe trailing behind her, not a spot of colour anywhere to lighten her sober attire. She entered the drawing-room just as the gong sounded, and heard her mother say:

"Mr. Dorian, will you take my daughter in?" and Dorian, his dark stern face gravely polite, offered her his arm. Vere took it mechanically and without exchanging a single word, not even the commonplace "How d'ye do," followed in the wake of the rest. Dinner passed somehow—how Vere never quite knew. A few remarks on the beauty of the weather, the heather and shooting, etc., were hazarded by Dorian, and received with stony monosyllables by Vere.

Once in the drawing-room the girl forgot both manners and duty. Without a word to anyone she opened the window, and with a long drawn breath of relief stepped out into the cool Autumn night. Above the stars twinkled peacefully, all around the moor lay dark and silent, here and there a tiny flickering light told of some lonely cottage. On went Vere down through the maze of winding shadowy paths, on until the garden was left behind, and she stood alone—a silent black clad figure amidst the surrounding darkness, the deep vault of heaven above her, the fragrant peaty earth beneath her feet. Not a sound broke the stillness, the house was hidden by the tall firs that quite surrounded the garden; she was alone—alone with nature, grand, still and wonderful. Alone with only the stars to watch her path. And Dorian had come, he was really and truly but a little way from her, an inmate of the same house, one of her grandfather's guests, and she—it was her duty to be polite to him, and to entertain him with the others. And yet the last time he had insulted her, grossly insulted her.

A hot flush rose in the girl's pale cheeks, and was fanned away by the gentle night breeze. Suppose he had meant it, suppose—but why should she suppose anything so unlikely? Vere's head drooped, and her slender fingers crushed themselves together. It was hard, hard to think that he loved Katherine, Katherine who cared for no one, not even him, far less for her own husband. Bah! what nonsense she was thinking. He was nothing to her, nothing—she would show him that he was not. Just then Vere turned quickly, surely she heard something. She started to her feet with a sudden terror; somebody was coming over the heather, striding quickly towards her; was it a tramp? and then she felt inclined to laugh aloud. A tramp in irreproachable evening dress, so likely! A nervous tremor seized her: almost unknowingly she sunk back on the grassy mound from which she had risen, and resolutely turned her head away from the quickly approaching figure.

"They told me you had gone out, I have been looking for you everywhere." The voice was Dorian's. "I can wait no longer, I must, I will know whether you meant what you said the last time we met. Miss Lorimer, surely you have forgiven my blundering idiocy, surely,—surely you have forgiven me now?" Had she?

Vere did not speak; with a great effort she raised her head and looked at him; for a minute Dorian stood and stared at the pale

flower-like up-turned face, at the sad wondering eyes, and the little tremulous mouth.

"Do you believe me, believe that I love you now, better than I have loved anyone before. Believe that I never loved Katherine with the love I offer you. Vere, I ask you, beg you to marry me, not because of anything else, but that I love you, because—because I can't bear my life without you?"

Still Vere was silent, and Dorian with a passionate despair in his voice bent down and took her cold passive hand. "Don't tell me Vere, have pity, forgive me. I have been a vain pigheaded ass, I thought you cared for me in London. I see now only too plainly what a fool I was, I don't deserve your love. But oh! my darling, say you care for me a little."

"I do," said Vere, in a queer indistinct little voice, "but I never thought you really cared for me."

"And I," said Dorian, gently, "I never knew how sweet, how good—how far above me in every way you were, until that night, when you sat beside my mother's bed. Oh! Vere, I am sure she will be glad, and you my darling have kept your promise after all."

"Yes! and now let us go in, Norrys," she said half shyly, "mother will be wondering where we are." But it was quite an hour later before Mrs. Lorimer saw them step in at the open drawing-room window.

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### To a Friend.

Ah! dear, if thy heart should grow callous at last,  
And thy friendship no longer be mine;  
Remember that once in the time that is past,  
You were faithful thro' shadow and shine.

So I treasure that love which was tender and true,  
And my thoughts ever wander to thee;  
And memories sweet of those dear old dead days,  
Softens life and its sorrows for me.

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GERALD HAYWARD.

## **Jubilee Stamp-quest of Abner Keggs.**

By HALBORO DENHAM.

IT was with no little interest one day, just a decade ago, that I read a letter from my old friend Abner Keggs, of Boston, U.S. He was about to visit England for the first time, but although he had made his pile and retired from business, I felt sure that something else besides Jubilee sight-seeing was inducing him to cross the Herring Pond. What that purpose was I could not guess, but I was too well acquainted with Abner Keggs not to know that, despite his being a Yankee out and out, big shows had very little attraction for him. With plenty of money at his command, he had never yet set foot in effete Europe, and the glorification of Western democracy at the expense of the Royalties of the Old World, was with him a hobby. When success at last gave him the opportunity for enjoying well earned leisure (if he ever really understood what the word meant) it also enabled him to cultivate one or two tastes, the indulgence of which he seemed to have put by for later life. One of these had I knew developed into a positive mania for sleeping and working in the uppermost regions. This he attributed to some remote cliff-dwelling ancestry, but I believe the truth of it was that he had been born and bred in a semi-subterranean cottage, and the memories of that early home created in him a passion for altitude. Indeed, had Tartarin, of Alpine fame, come across him, he would have instantly made a disciple or a rival as candidate for a broken neck. It was precisely this weakness of Abner's which now became the source of no little perplexity to me, for I was commissioned to find him quarters as high as the top of St. Paul's, if I could. Nothing very short of this would well do for the man whose home was in a pair of attics in a twenty storey building. Well, at the cost of some hours hunting about, I was at last successful in discovering suitable lodgings at Queen Anne's Mansions, and I felt so proud of my choice that I enjoyed my humble chop with extra relish and the pleasurable anticipation of Abner's surprise at finding himself ensconced so high above the din of London street traffic. At last I got a wire telling me of his arrival at Liverpool, and so in due



course I hied to Euston and met him. It was with something like elation that I cabbed Keggs to his loft and he acknowledged that I had acquitted myself well of the task of locating him airily. Thereupon I took him round to my club, where, over the after-dinner cigar and whisky and soda, he broached for the first time the real purport of his journey.

He had contracted since I last parted from him a passion for collecting rare stamps, and it was the chance of securing a very valuable one which had brought him across the Atlantic. It seemed that once upon a time the governor of the island of Criadera, who was governed by his wife, was persuaded by his better half to have her portrait engraved on a new issue of stamps for the colony. All the cyclones which had swept that island from time immemorial were as nought compared to the hurricane raised by feminine jealousy when Mrs. This or Miss That found that they could not post a letter or take the receipt for the cook's wages without being confronted by the representation of the governor's wife. When Downing Street stepped in the stamps went out of circulation, and the governor and his lady went out of the office just in time to avert a revolution. Keggs had heard of the existence and whereabouts of one of these stamps and meant to have it. So the following morning after an early breakfast I met him at Charing Cross and accompanied him by train to Blackheath; the manner in which he had got scent of his quarry was told me on the road.

"Since giving up business," said he, "I have taken a niece of mine in hand, and, last fall engaged a governess for the girl. The lady is a German, whose mother lives at Blackheath, the latter has charge of some of her daughter's books and such like, and among them is the stamp album containing the specimen I want. I have a letter in my pocket authorising me to take the album away."

"All plain sailing," I interrupted.

"Not so easy, my boy—there's a fool of a brother in the way. He is an Anarchist, and has been trying to get hold of the stamps for some darned plot of his, and from all I have heard he would put a bullet through either of us if he thought we were walking off with the Criadera, provided of course he could do so with safety to himself, for such fellows look pretty sharp after their own skins. I guess however Abner Keggs knows a trick or two worth this." My friend showed me a formidable looking Bulldog revolver, which would

have scared the most hardened burglar, let alone one of the wretches whose guiding principle is "to live without work and kill without fighting."

"But why, in the name of goodness, did not the old lady send out the album yonder?"

"The girl was so frightened of the Anarchist rascal that she hid it. The son began as a spendthrift before he took up with the bomb fraternity, and Miss Paull hid the book one day to prevent his selling it. She got a travelling engagement with some people I know in the States, and before leaving in haste she hid the album under the floor of the summer-house in the back garden. There was no time after she made up her mind to join my friends for her to pack her traps properly, so digging was out of the question. Yes, it was a queer way to hide her treasures, but then women are rum cattle. The worst of it is that the Anarchist cuss knows of the Criadera stamp and has ransacked the house for it, for he is aware of its value. He wants money for his infernal gang, and has written to Miss Paull, saying that the precious brotherhood must have the Criadera, which is worth a couple of thousand dollars if it's worth a cent."

"How do you know the fellow has not found the stamp since he wrote?" was my next query. Abner looked startled.

"He had not last night, anyway. When I left you yesterday I went straight with a police introduction from our men to your head bosses here and arranged to find out young Paull's late movements. Your chaps must be pretty cute and wide awake, I calculate, for I have already heard that he has not been to Blackheath for over a month. Here's his address." I looked at a card and read "Franz Paull, Amicables Club, Charlotte Street."

"I am going to introduce you and explain what I want. Then you must go to the garden and get the book up. It will only be a five minutes job. The album is in a box which is not locked. Tear out page 40, put it in your pocket, wrap the book up in this paper, and rejoin me."

On knocking at Mrs. Paull's house, which we found to be a small detached villa residence abutting on the Heath, the door was opened by the good lady herself, and we were shown into a bright little sitting-room, where Keggs, in his energetic way, quickly arranged matters. At his suggestion that I should step into the back garden

and have half a pipe whilst he finished his chat, I withdrew. In five minutes that album was unearthed with the help of a garden trowel lying handy, and then page 40 was neatly but hurriedly torn out and slipped into my breast pocket. Following my instructions, I next made my way into the hall and placed my parcel on a chair with my hat on the top. Mrs. Paull and Keggs came out, and, as we took our leave, I noticed that the former glanced uneasily at my burden as if it were some uncanny thing.

On emerging from Charing Cross terminus I led Keggs into Gatti's, where we sat down to lunch. How he gloated over that stamp! In my opinion he waxed simply childish, but at last capped all his folly by solemnly confiding the wretched thing to me as he wished me good-bye until later in the evening, and hurried off with the album under his arm. Now, incredible as it may appear, I did not realise the importance of my charge. My sole experience of stamp collecting had been briefly terminated at school, when I sold by auction some scores of varieties, now, I regret to learn, considered very valuable, and the shilling or two which the transaction brought me, promptly went in ginger-beer and tarts at our tuck shop. Keggs had left me without any precise warning about exhibiting the Criadera, and so I speedily found myself dipping it in a glass of water to detach it from the leaf I had torn out. To tell the honest truth I felt tired, which was, after all, not to be wondered at, considering the unusually early morning's work I had got through, including two meals in the place of one. I had sacrificed myself for the sake of Keggs, and felt lazily disinclined to stir from my comfortable lounge, although it was not yet two. In fact I was getting drowsy.

"Would you like a game of chess, sir?" was the query on the part of a young man in blue spectacles and a rather continental get-up. This effectually roused me from my lethargy. The mention of chess generally does, and at that epoch I was a pretty constant player at Gatti's. The challenge came natural to me and I accepted it. As I somewhat hastily removed the stamp from the water, brushed it lightly on a table napkin, and put it into my waistcoat pocket, my new found adversary said: "So you are a philatelist and have a rare prize. I did not know there was one like it knocking about." I was taken aback, for the man had evidently a keen eyesight despite his goggles. Well, I won the first move

and opened with the King's gambit, which I worked into a pet variation of mine. But I had met my match, for my antagonist mated me after a tremendous struggle which lasted a good three hours. He offered to give me a chance of my revenge, but I declined on the plea of an engagement, and as we parted, he gave me a card on which I read for the second time that day "Franz Paull, Amicables Club, Charlotte Street." I involuntarily shot a keen glance at my late opponent as I threaded my way between the rows of busy tables, and on the threshold of the restaurant stood for a moment irresolute as to how to act in this strange case of double discovery. Here, apparently by the veriest chance, I had come across Franz Paull on the same day that I had first learned of the existence of such an individual, and I somehow felt a misgiving that he had recognised the Criadera stamp as the one he had been trying to get hold of. Was his presence in the café and in my customary corner, altogether an accident? Nonsense, it could be only one of those coincidences proving that the world is not so big after all. We were both chess players, and enthusiasts in those days were pretty sure to come into touch with one another at Gatti's sooner or later; that was, I decided, about the top and bottom of the matter. Still, it was worth while telling Keggs of the curious meeting, and so I adjourned to Queen Anne's Mansions only to find him out. Leaving word for him to meet me at my club, I hurried off to my rooms to fetch my summer overcoat, for there were signs of a heavy storm brewing. That was no sooner accomplished than I found the garment too warm. To carry it over my arm would be a nuisance. Finally, I settled the difficulty by depositing it at the club, where I took the opportunity of having a light dinner. Whilst meditating over a cigar as to how to kill time till Keggs turned up, I conceived the insane desire (as he would have termed it) of running Paull to earth at the Amicables, with the excuse that I could not rest without another bout. The idea was barely entertained, than I was strolling leisurely along Wardour Street, and not many minutes later was in the locality of the Anarchist haunt, for such I judged it to be. It was no difficult matter to find the looked-for battle ground, but once at the entrance I paused a moment, for it seemed deucedly like venturing into the lions' den. However, what was the good of coming so far and then turning tail? I strode in and asked a man,

whom I took for a German waiter, whether Paull was visible? "Yes, the gentleman will find Herr Paull in the inside." I was about to push open a side door which looked like the entrance to the kind of club room which abounds in the quarter. He stopped me, however, and said he would first make sure if Paull was there. Secrecy evidently reigned. I could not pass muster as even an amateur detective, but perhaps the fellow scented the professional journalist. Once more as I waited I had leisure enough to reflect that I was probably doing a foolish thing, and a thought crossed my mind that poor old Keggs would disapprove of such rashness, but I did not sympathise with his folly in luring me out of bed at such an unearthly hour for a beggarly square inch of paper. At last when I was ushered into the rather dimly lit room my antagonist of the afternoon stood before me and at once expressed his delight at having discovered such a warlike opponent. Then turning to an exceedingly powerful looking negro, whose very tall and broad brimmed top hat made him look too big for the room he sat in, Paull remarked,

"Antoine, here is the foeman I was speaking of—one worthy of my steel."

"You mean skill," said the other. "But if you are fighting *à outrance* you may want steel enough."

"By Jove!" continued Paull, "I should never have expected you to look me up so keenly. But to be sure you must dearly love the game from what I have seen of your play at times. Well, here's a board. I suppose we toss again."

"No, it's your turn with white. I am rather at home in managing black," was my answer, glancing, whilst Paull lit another jet or two at the huge negro, on whose face I detected a scarcely perceptible smile. I have since thought that these last words of mine although quite innocent were taken by both my listeners as having a meaning never intended. As it happens, in chess matters the French Defence is a favourite game with me. I filled and lit my pipe, and the game began. In the end it went in my favour.

"Shall we have a conqueror?" said Paul. I was now, to confess the truth, wrapped up in chess. Keggs and his stamps and our appointment were clean forgotten. Besides, the evening was young, rain was falling heavily, and so we had another set to. I opened with

the King's gambit, and this time my variation came off successfully after a long and hard fought battle.

"That's right, mine host!" said Paull to a Frenchman, who had been bustling about, and who now placed a couple of glasses on our table and produced a bottle of what I speedily judged to be very fair Bordeaux. The next game went against me and the score was now equal, so we opened the deciding struggle. In this I did not prove a stayer. The room, in spite of the windows being open, was uncomfortably warm and seemed to grow more and more so as the night wore on. Whilst my antagonist took to studying the moves more carefully than in the previous games, I caught my mind wandering from the board to Keggs. As for the other Anarchists, they had with one or two exceptions vanished, but there in his corner was still sitting the gigantic negro with that cynical smile still playing about his thick lips. Somehow or other it seemed meant for me as if he felt sure I was in for a defeat. To make matters worse I began to feel drowsy again. This would never do, so tossing off another glass I endeavoured to concentrate my attention on the game. But I could not shake off the lethargy which had got hold of me, and even a cup of coffee which I was weak enough to have recourse to, did not rouse me into fighting trim. Try as I might, clear perception of my antagonist's strategy and all fertility of resource to meet it seemed to be leaving me. My play grew feebler and feebler, and my nodding more frequent, and at last, after apologising for my lengthy consideration of a rather simple move, I heard Paull say; "Mate in four, sir!" and I went off in a sound sleep. When I awoke it was with a start and cold shiver. The gas was yet burning near our table, and Paull was sitting opposite me just as he had been when he announced my discomfiture. The horrible full blooded negro had apparently not budged. I confusedly glanced at the clock. Good Heavens! it indicated 3 a.m. Staggering to my feet like one aroused from a drunken stupor, I was dimly conscious of the disagreeable thought that I had been drugged and maybe robbed, and I instinctively felt in my pockets. But the small sum I had on me when I entered the club seemed intact, and my old silver watch of little value except to its owner was still in its accustomed place. Somewhat ashamed of showing such signs of suspicion, I was, whilst reaching for my hat

and stick stammering some lame apology for my conduct when the negro quitted his chair and barred my exit.

"So you have been overmatched. You have skill at the play, but our Franz is more adroit. Ah, truly, he knows how to give you lessons. Yes, you have made a bold stroke to come here, but *Sacre Diable* why did he not bring his American, Franz?" I thought the fellow must have been drinking, and looked at Paull who was drumming with the chessmen on the marble table. Suddenly he seemed to tap a kind of signal, and half a dozen men entered silently and ranged themselves in a group on the chairs nearest the door, which they shut. What a villainous collection they presented! Foreigners all of them, and such types of low cunning in undersized humanity I have seldom seen. I was alone with the scoundrelly crew, gripping my stick with a wild idea of hurling myself among the lot and trying to fight my way out. I am sure I could have managed the smaller fry, but the black giant was another matter. I began to realise that diplomacy was the only thing. A woman in such a fix would have startled all Charlotte Street with one scream, and had the life squeezed out of her in a trice. The men were desperate, that was evident. They thought I was a spy, and they had come to some determination as to the nature, which I was not long left in doubt. Perhaps they were meditating some infernal outrage during the celebration of the Jubilee. Was I to be knocked on the head like some rat in a hole? If so, why did I still find myself in this room instead of awakening bound and gagged in the cellar? Were there no means of escape? What of the window? No, that was shuttered and barred inside, and there were two doors between me and the street, both probably secured, and a pack of ruffians guarding me, a prisoner. All these thoughts flashed across me in an instant. Suddenly Paull threw himself back in his chair, and said, as if he was the arbiter of my fate, "you have brought this on yourself. Don't let's mince matters. You know our opinions and have come here to learn what you could. I am very sorry to inconvenience you, for I like a good chess player (I believe the rascal was sincere) but I have the honour to be chief of this society, and I am about to make a proposal to you. Oblige me by following me to our committee room. Antoine will join us, and there you must decide for yourself."

"If you mean to make conditions before letting me out of this trap, say on at once."



"That is a matter for us three to settle alone—are you ready?"

Paull rose and moved to the rear of the room. I followed, putting on as bold a face as I could, and trying to show a confidence I was very far from feeling, and as the negro walked behind me I recollect that I could almost fancy his fingers at my throat. Paull touched a spring, a panel in the wall slid open, and, in another instant, we were in a small chamber lit by a single gas burner, and decorated with the most diabolical frescoes of men and beasts, as if some lunatic had run riot with a skilful brush and a morbid mind. I took a chair with as much calmness as I could muster, on the innermost side of the small table, which I trusted would be some kind of barricade and protection if need arose. The negro waved his hand towards the walls (there was no window, not even a skylight) and said "You see here my masterpieces—ah! I have studied at the Paris *ateliers*, but just now you cannot admire art. Presently perhaps you will have leisure." I could not help regarding the repulsive black as the high executioner of the gang, and had seen enough of the West Indies to understand that the crackbrained ruffian who had studied painting in Paris and had produced these fiendish looking wall pictures must have been initiated into the hideous Vadhon cult of Hayti. Paull did not keep me long waiting. "You had a valuable stamp on you this afternoon. I have a better right to it than you. Where is it?"

Now through all this cursed business I had never given the stamp a thought. I felt in my pocket; the thing was not there. Both the men smiled at my perplexity. Of course they had long ago ascertained that it was not on me. I told them that I no more knew where the stamp was than the man in the moon. Then I got angry and defiant and warned them that as soon as I was missed I should be looked for in Charlotte Street. Never shall I forget the expression which came over the black's face. He muttered a few words in French patois to Franz, but I caught the word "*frangine*," which I knew meant sister, and some allusion to the American. Paull nodded, and turning to me said: "We have no time to waste. If you cannot find the stamp, give me a note to your American friend, asking him to send three hundred pounds in cash by the bearer. I shall consider that an equivalent, although the stamp alone is worth more."

"I shall do no such thing. My friend is not the fool you take him for."

Just then a peculiar tap came to the door. Paull got up, and first telling me that he would leave me to consider the situation a little with his friend, he opened the panel and re-entered the club room. Picture my feelings, closeted as I was with my black jailor, who I felt certain was not only an Anarchist but a worshipper of the horrible Vadhon sect—one of those demons on earth who have made the fair island of Hayti a hotbed of murder and cannibalism. In plain English I was alone and face to face with a murderous man-eater in a silk hat. Perhaps a madman.

"You make a mistake in not doing as Paull wants. It is you who are in peril, not we. Think you I believe you when you say you will be sought here. *Mille fois non !*" The wretch took out a revolver, crossed one leg over the other, and bade me make up my mind to send for the money quickly, "or," he went on, "you may as well say your prayers. Your religion is a good one here, but we have one much better in my land. Still your Christian faith is not bad. Do you understand why I, Antoine Benoit, know it is good? No, you cannot comprehend. Listen and you shall see. Your priests tell you that when the dogs ate the wicked queen they did not touch the palms of her hands. Your writings must be true, for the palms of your hands taste bitter. We never eat them. But get the money—get it quick or pray very much, for time is short." I felt sure that Keggs would sooner or later recollect the card he had shown me and conclude that Paull and the Amicables were mixed up with my disappearance. The question was, how soon? If I gave the required paper it might facilitate my getting my liberty, and would not the gang be speedily captured with the plunder, even if it were given? On the other hand I reflected that they would probably leave me in this hole whilst they dispersed. But my situation with the cannibal and a six-shooter in his hand was intolerable. The minutes went slowly and my suspense was great as I watched my custodian, half expecting a bullet any instant. At last I heard a crash as if the front door was being broken in; Antoine sprang to his feet listening intently, then swung round towards me. The next second we were in darkness for he had turned out the gas. I dreaded a shot and shifted my position uneasily, feeling for the twentieth time that night a cold perspiration trickling down my back, as I waited silently,

holding my breath even, to hide my whereabouts. But no shot came; instead of that, I heard the most welcome sound I ever remember hearing, the cheery voice of dear old Keggs. Now I understood that the door must be at least unfastened and that Antoine must have fled during the last minute or so. And sure enough it yielded when I pushed, and I ran into the arms of a constable. He gripped me hard, but Keggs soon set things right, and we set about investigating the mystery as to the whereabouts of my kidnappers. They had evidently cleared off by a back door, locking it behind them, for there was not a soul on the premises beyond ourselves, and a second police officer, who was on guard at the front entrance, had seen nobody. After paying a visit to the police station in Tottenham Court Road, and relating all that had happened, it occurred to me to ask Keggs what had induced him to look for me at the Amicables. He explained that curiously enough the Scotland Yard people had sent to him, and a detective had accompanied him to Gatti's, which was known to be one of Paull's haunts. There they were not long in discovering that the Anarchist had met me at chess, and, as he had been the last person seen with me, my subsequent failure to keep my appointment at the club, coupled with the anxiety of Keggs about his stamp, at last suggested a visit to Charlotte Street, but not until he had searched far into the night for me elsewhere. When Keggs asked if the Criadera was all right I felt very much floored, but hoping for the best, said I would look for it at my diggings, and give it to him when we met a few hours later. Then I hailed a hansom, and having dispatched my rescuer to his quarters, I hurried off to my own in Gower Street. Arrived in front of my door I mechanically felt for my key, but to my surprise it was not forthcoming. However, I recollected that it was probably in the pocket of the overcoat which I had left at my club, and although it seemed scarcely worth while knocking the people up, yet I decided to do so. After apologising for what was, on my part, a record proceeding, I went to roost. My adventures must have played havoc with my nerves, for my slumber seemed disturbed by hideous dreams, and I was just in the throes of a nightmare in which the Vadhou man was about to kill me in the Obeah fashion preparatory to giving an Anarchist supper, when I was mercifully roused by my Yankee friend. His first question was for the Criadera stamp, and I promptly tried to satisfy him by diving into my dressing

gown and ransacking everything, but to no purpose. He next catechised me carefully about my movements prior to my going to the Amicables. I answered meekly and submissively like a penitent schoolboy, and never did a juvenile culprit grasp at a straw with greater eagerness than I did when I remembered the overcoat. Keggs charitably allowed it for the moment to cover a multitude of sins. He even conceded me five minutes for my morning tub, and actually joined me at a hasty breakfast. (Somehow Keggs always made my existence a rush when he was about.)

I now learned that he had received by post a letter from Mrs. Paull, saying that her son had entered by the back-garden just in time to see us when we had been leaving the house at Blackheath. He had caught up the letter which Keggs had brought about the album and which the good lady had left on the table, and then he had furiously sallied out after us. He would very likely keep us in view, and the letter was to put Keggs on his guard. At this stage the landlady appeared on the scene, a prey to intense excitement. I speedily gathered that the lock of the front door had been tampered with, and in her opinion it must have occurred some time since ten the previous night.

I left the breakfast-table and made a hasty survey of my effects, but could not detect anything wrong. The situation was humiliating, with Keggs looking as if he were more sorry for me than himself; and the landlady waiting, as if she half expected me to secure the burglar at a minute's notice. She further exasperated me by insinuating that I had perhaps damaged the lock by trying the wrong key, and she even appealed to me to turn my pockets inside out. I had almost given her notice when Keggs came to the rescue by suggesting that we should go round to my club and investigate the overcoat. But he altered his mind on the arrival of a locksmith, and we waited until the man had done his job.

"Well, mum; there's been burglars or some such gentry at work, but what they wanted to leave this behind beats me." So saying, the locksmith held out a crumpled piece of paper. Keggs took it, and tenderly unfolded his confounded Criadera stamp.

I promptly gave the man a half dollar, but Keggs shook him heartily by the hand, and gave him a fiver. Then we went on our way rejoicing to my club, where, of course, I found my overcoat and the latchkey safe in a side pocket. As for the stamp, there could be

little doubt that after putting it, damp as it was, in my waistcoat pocket, it had adhered to my key. I had used the latter only once since, when I went to fetch the overcoat, and the stamp, still adhering unnoticed, as I mechanically opened the door, had become detached in the interior of the lock. Paull had evidently followed us to town, and after watching Keggs hand me the stamp at Gatti's, had challenged me to a game of chess in hopes of getting some opportunity of securing the specimen. My subsequent movements had been carefully watched until my unexpected visit to the Anarchist Club had offered a chance of drugging me and annexing the prize. Not finding it on me, an attempt had been made to enter my lodgings. This was perhaps the best explanation for their delay in bringing things to a crisis when they tried to bully me into writing to Keggs for a ransom.

Here was a pretty elaborate range of operations condensed into such a short space of time, and I was at last fully convinced of the value of the Criadera stamp. I piloted Keggs to the Chancery Lane Safe Deposit, where it found an asylum whilst we did the Jubilee sights together. Then my friend went back a happy and contented man to Boston. As for the Charlotte Street gang, they one and all escaped to carry their cursed propaganda to other lands.

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## Damocles, or the Gates of Janus.

By THEODORA CORRIE.

Author of "IN SCORN OF CONSEQUENCE," "PETRONELLA DARCY,"  
"ONLY THE AYAH," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER VIII.

THE Duchess of Harebrook was a great lady, too great a lady to please the wives of some of the county magnates with whom she had to do. The first years of her married life had been chiefly spent in Paris, where her husband had held an appointment in the diplomatic service, and though on the death of his father he returned to the Grange, he found English society rather tame after the brilliant life he had led abroad. He brought over with him many of his French servants, his wonderful collection of old French glass, and a decided taste for foreign manners and customs. Under his wife's skilful fingers the rooms at the Grange acquired a certain elegance that had nothing English about it. She was apt to fill the house with foreigners too, this habit constituting a crowning offence in the eyes of her neighbours; but it would have taken a bold person to find fault with the Duchess.

Her charities were munificent; the bishop of the diocese came to her for help, when in need of money for church purposes, sure beforehand of her assistance; her name headed the list of patronesses of all important functions, and, wherever she went, there followed an atmosphere of state and ceremony, which in some people might have been considered affectation, but which seemed as much a part of herself as the air she breathed, or the rings on her long, slender hands.

*Grande dame* she was to her finger tips, though a certain vein of cold and ironical bitterness often tinged her conversation and marred her popularity. Those few persons who were near and dear to her knew this bitterness to be a mask donned by a proud and reserved nature, a shield, behind which lay many stronger feelings.

This evening, as she received her guests, her step-son at her side seemed to be a person of secondary importance. His manner was graceful enough, but on these occasions he was generally secretly conscious of some boredom, boredom successfully veiled by politeness.

At sixty, the fire of his step-mother's dark eyes was still unquenched, the tall figure, unbent, though sorely wasted. The white hair, thick and glossy still, turned off a low, broad brow, and rolled in an artistic profusion of soft twists, framed a face delicately and finely cut as a mask of thin ivory. Ill or well, sad or gay, the Duchess was generally immovably composed, though a fine observer might have noted that her very composure had something frozen in it, the composure of one to whom indifference had become second nature. Only once this evening, at the moment of Henrietta's entrance, the shadow of a smile had passed over her face. She had seldom taken much notice of her great-nieces, had never carried them off to her own rooms when they had spent the afternoon at the Grange with Ted, though once a year she gave a children's party, on Christmas Eve, to which, in former days, May and Henrietta had gone, dressed in their best frocks, and burdened with many injunctions from Sophie as to their behaviour. For Henrietta, the house would hold a certain glamour, and to-night the glamour rested on it still.

Brilliantly lighted up, the whole place looked beautiful. The entrance halls paved with semi-transparent onyx-marble, and bordered on either side with palms and rare shrubs; the reception rooms with their ceilings painted in Italian landscapes; the walls hung with delicate Indian silk; the old chandeliers of French glass, flashing a thousand colours from their wax lights; all this made up a fairyland through which Henrietta moved for the first time as a grown-up guest, feeling a little amused at herself, as if she were acting a part in some old castle of romance on whose threshold stood her great-aunt, transformed into a beneficent princess, whose thin, jewelled fingers would, this evening, push open for one new comer, the gate of society.

After receiving a greeting, Henrietta passed on, more happy in mind than some of her neighbours. The Duchess had a way of receiving all communications with as much quiet attention, as if they were state despatches of importance; and this manner sometimes made the smaller county magnates feel routed, people whose sheet-anchor of conversation chiefly attached itself to the state of the roads, the weather, or the crops. Henrietta, indeed, might be considered highly favoured, for her great-aunt had kissed her, a demonstration worth half a dozen caresses from anyone else.

Mrs. Goodwin, preceding the two girls, and leaning on Godwin's



arm, moved languidly, with the air of a person conferring a favour by the mere fact of her presence. Her dress of black velvet, trimmed with old point, suited her admirably, and contrasted effectively with the white gowns of her daughters.

Fresh, smiling, erect, May looked brilliantly pretty to-night. The sprays of orchids on her bodice were fastened by a diamond and emerald clasp, borrowed from her mother; and in her fair fluffy hair sparkled a tiny star of the same stones. As the two sisters moved along side by side, there was no more resemblance between them than that which can be traced between a humming bird and a swan.

On reaching one of the inner rooms, Mrs. Godwin came comfortably to a halt, seating herself on an ottoman and entering into conversation with Ted and Lady Evelyn, who had just arrived, bringing Captain Strafford with them. Needless to say, the latter addressed his conversation to May, while John Godwin, after a scarcely perceptible hesitation, sat down by Lady Evelyn, remarking that he had received orders to take her into dinner.

There were about a dozen people staying in the house, amongst others, Mrs. Godwin's cousin, the Comte de Brie. M. Réport, a literary Frenchman, the well-known proprietor of a Parisian paper. A German baron, and the baron's younger brother. The bishop of the diocese, and the bishop's wife, the bishop's chaplain, and the bishop's pretty daughter. Also, because the neighbouring county town boasted not only a cathedral but a military dépôt, there was a detachment of "colonels and captains," and last but not least, conspicuous in the midst of the military group, might have been seen a certain Lady Marianne Windsor St. John, a dark eyed, dark browed, handsome girl, who often stayed at the Grange, assigned to the Duke, by rumour, as a suitable match, chosen by his step-mother.

These persons made up the house party, and with the arrival of various other guests, everyone went into dinner. May moving off talking fluent German, on the arm of one of the Duke's musical friends, while Captain Strafford followed closely behind, ungratefully anathematising the social fate which had temporarily linked him to bishop's pretty daughter. Henrietta was taken in by the literary the Frenchman, M. Réport, a little man, with a pair of grey eyes almost as protuberant as those of a lobster, a self-assertive manner and a

style of conversation consisting chiefly of a string of questions, a man inclined to extract "copy" from everybody.

His remarks delivered at short intervals came one after the other, like the dropping of small shot, or the placing of interrogation points. Before dinner had far advanced, he became inwardly astonished, and a trifle piqued to find M. de Brie's conversation preferred to his own.

The Count, seated on Henrietta's other side, was one of those people who would always be popular everywhere. A man half French, half Italian by birth, a cosmopolitan by nature, seemingly touched only on the surface by the snows of time, and within perennially young.

Of late years he had rented Mrs. Godwin's Palazzo near Palermo, but as a young man he had lived chiefly in Paris. While there he had filled the post of private secretary to the late duke. Whenever the duchess wintered abroad, he was always a favoured guest, though he had never, till this spring, found his way to the Grange. Mrs. Godwin felt annoyed that he should have accepted this invitation after declining to come to Godwin's Rest only four months previously. She said to herself this evening, that if family ties had not availed to bring him to see her, a matter of family business would probably prove a more effectual spur to his energies.

The value of property having risen considerably in the neighbourhood of Palermo, Mrs. Godwin, thanks to a break in the lease of her house which would occur this autumn, had already suggested doubling the yearly rent so far paid by the Count.

Now M. de Brie, as an enthusiastic flower grower, had brought his garden to a rare state of perfection. He was also contemplating various little improvements this year, which would not only become impossible if the proposed arrangement were carried out, but worse still, the increased rent might force him to leave his home altogether. He was not particularly well off; the villa, in its way represented a small gem, and a Naboth's vineyard into the bargain. More than one rich man in the neighbourhood had cast envious eyes upon it, and of this fact Mrs. Godwin was perfectly well aware.

But of these wheels at work below the surface, Henrietta remained happily unconscious. Long before the end of dinner she came to the conclusion that the Count was a charming old man (by the way he was barely fifty-nine, but at eighteen, fifty-nine may easily seem very old indeed).

His reminiscences of the French court, and of the Empress Eugénie, his witty stories, and droll sallies: his description of the Duchess in the days of her beautiful youth: above all, his courtly manner, tinged with a suspicion of deferential admiration, delighted Henrietta. She almost forgot to eat any dinner. There was something so fresh in her interest, so attractive in her smiles, that the attention of more than one person wandered frequently to her end of the table.

May's keen eyes noted that Ted twice over sent away the plate before him untouched, while M. Réport, after satisfying his appetite, never a small matter, presently entered the lists competing with the Count for the attention of his fair neighbour. He gained his end by an unexpected announcement, which sounded in Henrietta's ears like a note of alarm.

"Mr. Godwin writes for the journal of which I have the happiness to be the proprietor," he said, "I have been trying to persuade him to settle in Paris, but his views on this subject do not altogether coincide with my own. I wish that Mademoiselle would use her influence."

Upon Henrietta the effect of this speech seemed electrical. She turned her head, saying with a half caught breath: "I could never ask him to do that, never. You do not know how he loves this place. It would be cruel to try to persuade him to leave England."

"And yet it would be a good opening for Mr. Godwin's great talent. He writes 'magnificently': there is something of Carrel in his style: he identifies himself with his paper."

"I hope that he will not, I am sure that he would not wish it," Henrietta repeated.

"And yet," said Monsieur Report, with a faint suspicion of malice, "Mr. Godwin did not decline my offer. He said since the matter could be left open, that he would think about it, and that later on he might be glad to settle in Paris."

"He had better settle in London," said the Count carelessly. "I wonder, Réport, how you can attempt to commit robbery, to take a sister from a brother, or to separate a second Eugénie from a second Maurice."

"He is my cousin, not my brother," said Henrietta, blushing at the compliment, "but it is the same thing. We were brought up

together, and nearly all his friends are English. I hope, Monsieur, that you will not try to persuade him to go abroad."

As she spoke, leaning towards the little Frenchman, with the half startled half pleading look on her face, the thought suddenly struck the Count that perhaps the bias of Paul's future settlement, the casting vote for life, might be lying already in the unconscious hands of this girl, who had declared the young man to be just like her brother.

The declaration carried truth on the face of it, but perhaps it might not be destined to remain true. The daily life of these two had so far run along side by side, yet the Count suspected that before long the two paths were destined to diverge. Loveliness like Henrietta's, belonging as much to the beautiful as to beauty, to the soul as well as the body, ever carries with it a sense of the pathetic, because the attraction must come to so many and the supreme gift to one only.

No such thought as this had occurred to Réport, excepting that Henrietta's opposition only made him the more determined to get his own way. Some other channel might be found. Possibly the young man's father would not be willing to slight so excellent an opening. Réport flattered himself that he knew good material when he met with it. It is possible that he might have continued to urge the advantages of Parisian life, had not the Count at this moment uttered a very natural exclamation of pitying amusement, glancing the while down the table to where Captain Stafford had just received a glass of claret on his coat sleeve, thanks to the carelessness of a servant. Henrietta could not help smiling too.

"Poor Captain Stafford," she said, "his evil star is certainly in the ascendant to-night. He was lamenting to me before dinner that Lady Evelyn had not allowed him to bring his banjo. By his own account he is very musical."

"A banjo," said Réport, "miséricorde! A banjo would be as much out of place here, as a glass of beer at a temperance meeting. Music is a very serious matter in this house."

"But don't you think that half the people who are invited to the temperance meetings would be very glad of the beer if they could get it?" said Henrietta.

The spirit of contradiction had entered her so far as M. Réport was concerned. She looked at him now with a delicate suspicion

of mischief in her eyes: mischief accentuated by the irresistible drollery of her question. The Count stroked his moustache to hide some involuntary play of feature.

"Mademoiselle is right," he said gravely, "I am fond of beer myself."

"All the same," said the other, "I should pity anyone who ventured to produce it on the platform. It would take a bold man to follow up Wagner and Chopin, or the baron's improvisations with a nigger melody. Has Mademoiselle ever heard the baron improvise? No? It is a thing not easily forgotten. He spent two hours at the piano in the back drawing-room this afternoon, with the Duke on the sofa as audience. I believe his grace was fast asleep, though he managed to wake up at intervals to murmur 'sonderbar.' Afterwards we had a course of Chopin."

There was a suspicion of irony in M. Réport's voice. It may easily be supposed that the German contingent introduced by the Duke, formed at times a contrasting balance, a kind of sauce piquante opposing itself to the French element maintained by the duchess. True, M. de Brie would scarcely have lost his urbanity had he found himself in the midst of the biblical confusion on the plains of Shinar, but Réport was a man of a different type altogether.

"I am very fond of Chopin," said Henrietta, "the little ripple in his music is so delightful. It reminds one of falling water."

"Mademoiselle is fond of Chopin," M. Réport repeated, with the air of a person announcing a discovery, "doubtless she is also an able interpreter of his music?"

Henrietta's dislike to this little dark man was fast deepening into positive aversion. His flippant remarks represented a style of manner she had never before met with.

"I don't play Chopin well," she said quietly, "but I have heard him played very often, and one never seems to come to an end of his suggestiveness."

"Well," he said, "I am afraid I don't appreciate him. He is too ethereal altogether for my taste. I like some passion, some self-abandonment, in music, indeed in everything. I do not care for any amusement if I cannot get some excitement out of it."

"Perhaps," said the Count smiling, "perhaps Mademoiselle scarcely looks upon music in the light of an amusement; and pro-

bably she considers self-abandonment in its highest sense must of necessity be spiritual."

Henrietta looked at him comprehensively; for one of those brief moments which come so rarely, the two souls met as if by a mutual flash.

"Ah, yes," she said, unconscious of the troubled inflection in her voice, "for myself I would far rather be calmed than excited. A piano, and a bunch of violets. Wasn't that Chopin's idea of happiness? It used to be mine too."

"And now?" said M. Réport. But his question remained unanswered. At this moment dinner came to an end, and Henrietta rose to her feet.

The little Frenchman looked after her retreating figure with a complicated shrug of the shoulders: with a touch of unwilling admiration in his eyes—the admiration of one forced to acknowledge unexpected qualities in another. But all he said was: "Nature made a mistake somewhere: Miss Godwin ought to have been a Frenchwoman."

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## CHAPTER IX.

By the time the gentlemen had followed their hostess, people began to arrive in a continuous stream. When the rooms were half filled, the Duke played a fantasia on the violin in a very masterly manner, after which performance the baron improvised for the space of some fifteen minutes. The music he affected was generally of a weird and perplexing character, and everyone applauded in a subdued manner when he left off playing. It might have been noticed on these evenings that society went to the Grange very willing to praise, but singularly loth to play or sing. The little pause succeeding this second performance was presently followed by what Captain Strafford called the selection of the first victim, and in this instance the victim proved to be May.

The girl did not hurry herself in her progress towards the piano, though not at all inclined to defer her arrival there altogether, or to agree with Captain Strafford's murmured remarks, "I call it worse than a public execution," he said. "Fancy expecting other people to play after all this professional work. Lady Evelyn was quite

right about my banjo ; had I brought it, native modesty would have hanged me in the strings. If I were you, Miss Godwin, I should refuse to perform, only I am afraid that it is too late, the Duke has his eye upon you."

"I am very glad that he has," said May, smiling. "I don't agree with you at all. I had just begun to feel like the one canary in a 'happy family,' whose accomplishments seemed likely to be passed over. I think we all ought to contribute our share to the evening's entertainment, and the sooner I begin the sooner my part will be over."

Her cousin who was standing by the piano caught this last remark. He looked particularly languid, and his eyes drooped more than ever. As May seated herself on the music stool, he leaned forward, saying in a resigned voice: "You need not be afraid of my criticism. I promise you that I will make none."

"I was not thinking of myself," said May. "I was pitying you. You don't like any playing but your own, do you, cousin Sol?"

Tone and look were alike so innocently enquiring that they might have disarmed all suspicion. "If you will turn over for me," she went on, "it would be a comfort, or perhaps the Baron will be so kind ; it is always an assistance." She did not seem afraid to challenge criticism. Taking off her gloves in a leisurely manner, and handing them into Captain Strafford's custody, she played a difficult sonata all through, with a brilliancy of touch and a certainty of execution which did her master infinite credit.

By the time she had finished, the bishop's wife came to the conclusion that Miss Godwin would probably be a useful girl at concerts ; and the Duke's expression had changed from polite resignation to approval. May received his compliments without any confusion ; indeed, there was a touch of indifference in her manner which rather piqued him. He was not accustomed to have his attentions undervalued, and sometimes derived a languid amusement from the mild flutter which his presence occasioned among the young ladies of his acquaintance.

"You like my playing," said May ; "now I don't. I don't care about it in the least. I have had an excellent master, and I suppose I am a good mimic ; but he often told me that I could not put myself into good music, and he was quite right. I do not honestly care for it. I like playing Waldteufel's waltzes better than all the



sonatas that ever were written, only then I always long to be dancing at the same time. This would be a perfect house for a ball. Do you never give one here?" she ended, in her pretty composed voice.

She had a bird-like rapidity of flitting from one subject to another, which sometimes bewildered those listening to her.

"We have not had a ball here for a good many years in the summer time," said her cousin, looking down at her, much as a greyhound might look at a self-possessed kitten, while the people at a little distance came to the conclusion that Miss Godwin was trying to get up a flirtation, and that foreign schools were apt to make a girl sadly forward.

"If I had a house like yours," May went on, "I should be always dancing, summer and winter too. I wish you would give a ball soon, cousin Sol. Godwin's Worthy is a much duller place than Brussels."

"I will think about it; perhaps we may have a dance before long," said he, surprised at his own declaration. For when had his step-mother ever given a dance in the country at this time of the year?

"If he talks it over with Aunt Catherine it will probably come to nothing," May reflected. "It is his own house; he could give a ball every week if he chose to." Aloud she said, "Thoughts spoil with keeping. I can't imagine how most people get on here with only afternoon parties. However, Cousin Evelyn's birthday will be next month, and Captain Strafford says that he is going to help her celebrate it properly. I should hope that may mean private theatricals at the least. Captain Strafford plays the banjo, cousin; he is quite a shining light in the musical world. The banjo is a delightful instrument, particularly when well played and *voué au noir*; I mean to the exposition of nigger melodies."

"You do not mean to tell me, May, that you would prefer a banjo to your own playing?"

"Why not?" said May, mischievously. "If you ask for my opinion, I think I do. I believe half the world would be of my faction too, if they told the truth. No, cousin, it's no use shaking your head at me, for I like popular airs, and I adore dance music." She rose then, putting on her gloves, and holding out one hand to have a refactory button fastened. Though perfectly at her ease with

him, there was not a trace of coquetry in her manner; he might have been her grandfather.

So far he had always thought of her as a pretty, spoiled child, but this evening he found her drollery distinctly amusing. Some people have the knack of carrying on conversation for both sides at once. This habit certainly saves trouble if the second person is by nature indolent.

The Duchess, seated at some little distance, watched the small tableau with appreciative eyes, remarking, *sotto voce*, to Godwin who stood at her side: "That niece of ours is of the comet order, John. She will always draw a tail after her, and will be a society belle before many months are over."

"She reminds me more of a Dresden china shepherdess, than of anything else," said John, smiling. "She is very pretty, but——" he paused, and his eye travelling from May to Henrietta held an unspoken thought.

"Nature intends Henrietta for a great lady if she lives," said the Duchess. "No, I don't mean that she has bad health, but she has a mind and a heart, and, to judge by her face, labours under the misfortune of having cultivated both."

"Why misfortune, Aunt Catherine?"

"People get on so much better without, now-a-days," said the old lady. "A heart, more often than not, means a right of way for other people's pain, if not for one's own, till the bridge breaks down. Since, as Leopardi tells us, the nobler the nature, the greater must be the capacity for suffering. Pain may harden some people, but it kills others."

"And others, surely, it tempers to perfection."

"There isn't one nature in a hundred, John, that remains unwarped by the pressure of life. In this nineteenth century of ours, too much heart and too much feeling are apt to be a misfortune to some people; others,"—here she glanced imperceptibly in the direction of the piano where May still stood, the centre of a little knot of people—"others will get through life far more comfortably. There is always a scramble going on for the best place on a coach, and inside seats are worth securing when rough weather comes, even at the expense of some elbowing."

John who knew his aunt well, looked at her, smiling.

"Hetty will never need to use her elbows, of that I am quite con-

vinced ; she will find plenty of people ready to do it for her," he said, turning now, and glancing at Henrietta, who was seated at the other side of the room, watching May with an air of pretty interest.

"Miss Godwin tells me that she is very musical," suggested an unexpected voice, and the duchess looked up to find that M. Réport and the Count had come together to the side of her sofa.

"My niece, being a Godwin, has every right to be fond of music," she said. "And as for the Salviani family, M. de Brie can speak for them. Do you remember, Antoine," she went on, "the year that we made holiday, and you took us to Sicily to visit your aunt? What a true improvisatrice she was, and how she used to play to us by moonlight, with the piano taken into the verandah. Those beautiful old hands of hers had a fascination for me ; they could weave spells that might have drawn all creation after them. That was music worth listening to. I am told that my niece has inherited her great-grandmother's fingers, but the gift is hardly to be hoped for once in a century."

"If I might hazard a guess," said the Count, "I should say that Miss Godwin played by preference when nobody listened to her."

"Nevertheless," said the Duchess, "I should be glad if you would ask her to play to me."

The Count started on his errand with secret reluctance. Whatever the future might hold for this girl, at the present moment she reminded him more of an unpublished poem than of anything else, a poem too sweet to be handed over to the criticism of outsiders. He delivered his message, however, with the best grace possible, and felt a little surprised when Henrietta looked at him with a smile and a shake of the head.

"Mamma does not wish me to improvise at any parties for the present," she said, "because when I once begin to play, I always let my feelings run away with me, at least I never can remember that there is anyone listening. But I will sing something if my aunt would like me to."

She rose as she spoke, and the Count followed her with a humorous expression on his face.

As long as the world lasts many a Pegasus will be impounded by the placidly conventional, in the same way that the appearance of a rare bird is generally heralded by a shot gun.

Slipping her gloves under one of the brackets that supported the

candles, Henrietta kept nobody waiting; M. de Brie had offered to find her music, but drew back smiling, when she said that she had brought none, and that all her songs were in her head. There was no trace of shyness in her manner: her freedom from consciousness, that instrument of self-torture to so many girls, arising, not from indifference, but from lack of realisation that anyone would be likely to think much about her.

Henrietta could say truly that she was fond of singing, but Paul might easily have added that her playing was a part of her life, though most girls would have been well contented if they could have possessed her voice. It was a contralto of no wonderful compass, but excellently trained, and very true and sweet. This evening she sang with more expression than usual, choosing, at the request of the Count, an old French song, a simple, well-known air, with a refrain at the end of each verse.

The suggestion that Paul might find it necessary to settle in Paris had crossed her evening's happiness like the sudden pressure of a cold finger, linking itself to that other shadow always lurking in the background. It made her uneasiness take a more defined shape, and gave a touch of deeper feeling to a voice, which possessed at all times, an exquisite sympathetic tenderness.

Sitting there at the piano in the full light of the candles, with her head slightly raised, poised flower-like on its long throat; with the white lilies drooping from her white dress, and the little touch of wistfulness in her eyes, she made the fairest picture that the old rooms had framed for more than half a century: fairer than any of the painted faces looking down from the walls: fair to the Duchess as the shadow of her own lost youth.

Most people were gazing now in Henrietta's direction, but the Count's glance, quiet yet searching, concentrated itself first on Paul then upon Ted Lisle. The two men were within a few feet of each other. Paul stood with his eyes cast down and with a face so absolutely unmarked by any expression, that it might almost have been termed vacant, but the hand hanging at his side in its nervous tension, told a story to the Count's finely trained perceptions.

Ted's glance was fixed upon Henrietta's fingers as they moved over the keys, and his hazel eyes showed for a moment a wonderful tenderness, which belied the unstudied carelessness of his attitude. For the Count there was a great fascination in Ted's absolute

serenity, a serenity which seemed detached from its surroundings. Strangely enough, one of Henrietta's remarks, made during dinner, came back to his memory, with the force of an unconscious confession: "for myself I would far rather be calmed than excited."

The Count had gone through plenty of sharp suffering both mental and bodily during his sojourn on this earth of ours: had known so much of life in its sadder aspects, and seen so many dramas played out, that nowadays to half the actors he came across, it almost seemed to him that he could supply the cues beforehand, and trace each play to a probable conclusion.

But sometimes the cues are not ordinary ones. True, the old air of love is always the same, but its variations on the human heart are infinite, and to-night, despite the lights, and the flowers, and the music, it struck this man that here again for one life out of these three lay the probable opening of a tragedy.

Stifling a sigh, he turned away. Henrietta's song proved to be the success of the evening. The Baron, who was a sentimental man, wiped his eyes, and the Duke moving down the room to where his sister was seated, remarked, with unusual admiration in his voice, "Evelyn, where did that child learn to sing?"

"Oh, said Lady Evelyn, "singing comes to Hetty as naturally as it does to the birds, but she has had the advantage of good lessons too. Miss Lavender was one of Garcia's favourites: he wanted to bring her out. She went through all the requisite training, but if you remember her father was always against it, and she told me once that she could not bear the thought of all the eyes looking at her. Dear old sweet Lavender never made anything of me, but Henrietta's music might enchant anyone. I believe the child is always singing."

"Who would take those two girls for sisters?" said Sol, meditatively. "May reminds me of an American, without the twang. Fancy her telling me to give a ball! If I do have one on your birthday, will you come to it?"

"No, not on that day, Sol. I thought that we had nearly decided to have the concert then, and you always help me with that. I am not sure if the school house will hold all the people this year, and the navvies too. Now don't look so aggrieved, I fancied that you would do anything to please me. You had much better decide to have your ball on the eighth of next month to celebrate mamma's

birthday. Lady Marianne is a tremendous dancer, and it would be a polite attention, for she is leaving you on the ninth."

The Duke gave a savage twist to his moustache.

"If you think that I am going to give a ball for Lady Marianne you're very much mistaken: I will see her at No-man's land first."

"Poor Marianne! You have neglected her shamefully all the evening."

"I am sure I have been as polite as usual," said Sol, in an ag-grieved voice.

"She is a particular friend of mine, and a very nice girl. You don't half appreciate her."

"I think I have heard you make that remark before, Evelyn."

"And I thought that you agreed with me. When you had that dreadful cold, and were shut up for six weeks, two years ago, don't you remember how good she was to you?"

"Oh, she is always good to me, very good," Sol admitted, in grudging accents, "and I must own that she knows how to read aloud, but somehow she bores one. Besides, the St. Johns are all very well, but the Brown Windsor St. Johns came from the West Indies, and they imported too much of the family soap with them: I can't abide dark women."

"And I don't like spoilt bears," she said, shaking her head at him. "Let us see if we can find mamma. It is getting disgracefully late for her to be up. She is looking so tired to-night."

Lady Marianne Windsor St. John confided to her mother in a letter that evening, written in the privacy of her own bedroom, that she disliked conceited men, and really the Duke was getting so silent that he was unbearable. He had almost forgotten to wish her good-night.

Lady Marianne's accusation was not altogether without foundation. The life led by the Duke tended towards some self-indulgence. He would have said that he was very kind to his tenantry, for he had confided the care of his property to a thoroughly competent agent; but if left to itself, his benevolence would have ended there, so far as the farmers and tenants were concerned.

With regard to the poverty or the well-being of other people, his interest flowed naturally in only two channels. His help in the musical world was always lavishly given, and many poor and struggling musicians could have testified to his unfailing generosity:

also he subscribed largely to the Ship-wrecked Mariners' Society, or to anything of a nautical description, from the building of a lifeboat to the erection of a lighthouse. He was very wealthy, and his personal tastes were simple enough, though his yacht was perfectly appointed, and for two months in the season he generally had a box at the opera.

With only one lung left, and a portion of that in a far from satisfactory condition, he managed to exist very fairly—comfortably by his own account. His habit of perpetually following the sun had earned for him the nick name of Sol, while his yacht styled the *Clytie*, was very well known in Mediterranean waters. Ill health made him whimsical, and indolent: disinclined to exert himself from a social point of view, and quite content to see his step-mother reigning at the Grange, and his cousin dispensing hospitality in the family house in town.

But there was one person whose good opinion seemed dearer to the Duke than his yacht, his music, or his indolence, and that person was his sister Evelyn. Where she led he followed. Had she expressed a wish for a pair of tigers, he would have endeavoured to procure the creatures at the shortest possible notice, and personally superintended the clipping of their claws.

The collection of fossils referred to by Henrietta had been set on foot at Evelyn's instigation. Sol knew little of geology, and cared less: nevertheless the work was a good thing for the navvies from a pecuniary point of view, and it had already established a friendly feeling between a very rough lot of men and Lady Evelyn. Every Saturday she went to the works, inspected and paid for the finds of the week, and had them taken up to the Grange.

Her Grandfather had been a great entomologist, and had left behind him a beautiful collection of fossils, butterflies, and curiosities of all sorts. Evelyn had inherited his tastes, and always insisted that Sol ought to keep up the credit of the family. The fortunate bearer of ammonites or what not, generally inspected the museum, and the harmless traffic had been accepted as a pleasant, and a profitable one by the work people on the line.

Perhaps the only proceeding at which Sol secretly groaned was the yearly concert given by his sister in the village school house. The poor people of Harebrook, and the neighbouring farmers, cared little for classical music, and knew less: but they were very fond of



sentimental songs, and popular airs, and they liked to help in the affair themselves. Although Evelyn carefully inspected the programme, her brother writhed secretly, not once but many times, on such occasions. Still, no possibility of shirking ever entered his head, and the concert always came off in the end as a matter of course. This year's entertainment would form no exception to the general rule, and Evelyn's coming birthday had served, this evening, to fix the date of the performance.

Mrs. Godwin and her daughters drove home, but the night being fine, Godwin and Paul preferred to walk. A shower had fallen during dinner, and the sky now showed that luminously clear appearance so common after spring rain. The whole heavens were thick strewn with stars, beetles hummed across the grass, and dark bats, living shadows on wings of crape, flitted hither and thither. Like a line of ghostly sentinels, the trees in the long rides stood up black and silent, outlined against the sleeping twilight : and the delicate reflected traceries of branch, and leaf, and stalk, lay on the long grass forming a company of fairy shadows : bars of silver pursuing bars of darkness, swaying to and fro at the breath of the wandering wind. A night world unscorched by the sun, undefiled by speech, unbroken by a sound, save by the whisper in the trees : a night of silence and of May scented twilight.

The two men had nearly crossed the park before either of them spoke. Then Godwin said, somewhat abruptly :

"M. Réport has been talking to me this evening : he wants you to come to Paris in July. What do you think of this offer ?"

"I should like to accept it" said Paul slowly, "I would rather settle in Paris than anywhere else. I have nearly finished the play that I am writing, and I have begun upon a novel. Journalism isn't so much in my line, though I suppose one mustn't quarrel with what brings one money. I get well paid for my articles."

"I wish you could go in for something more paying than journalism or novel writing," said his father, "even supposing that your play should make a hit. You never come to me for money : I often wish that I could settle a better allowance on you. That hundred and fifty of your mother's is only a pittance, but you know that my affairs are, at present, in a very embarrassed state. Authorship is all very well for a single man, and I would be the last person to turn you from it, but if you were to marry you would find it hard to

support a household, unless you were more successful than the general percentage of writers."

"I shall never marry," said Paul.

"Has it ever struck you that you may be over scrupulous on that point, or that your scruples might at some future time bring sorrow into other lives besides your own?"

"I hope not," said Paul: "that sort of thing depends mostly upon the man, and not upon the woman in the first instance, doesn't it?"

"I am often tempted to wish that you could forget the past, Paul: some people could."

"Could they?" said Paul. "I think not."

"I trust," said John, in some emotion, "that you have bound yourself by no rash determination."

"The ground of my resolution was laid years ago, Dad: it has been growing ever since. Have you forgotten what I once saw? Have you forgotten my mother's end?"

"Hush! hush!" said the other hurriedly, "I cannot bear the re-opening of old wounds."

"Forgive me," said Paul, remorsefully.

For awhile the two walked on without speaking, then John said: "You are a Godwin, remember! In your case disaster is unlikely to follow you. You must know that: you must believe it."

He spoke pleadingly, but Paul's answer came back, low and almost stern.

"I can't believe it."

Beaten at one point, John tried another.

"At any rate," he said, "every woman has a right to choose for herself: a right of which it would be scarcely fair to deprive her. Perhaps some day you will fall in love, and then you will remember my words. Besides, your grandmother was in a worse position than yours: she made her own choice and married the Count with her eyes open."

"Do you think that she would have married him if she could have realised the future?"

"She was willing to risk it: she could not foresee the future, Paul."

"But he could," said Paul, a ring of indignation stirring now in his voice. "Brought up in a convent, with no more knowledge of

the outside world than a child, how was she to suspect all that such a contract contained or rather all that it lacked. There are some things burnt into me ; some things that I can never hope to forget."

There was silence between the two for the space of half a minute : presently Godwin spoke again : the hour seemed one for confidences in the half darkness.

"If you cannot forget the past, try at least to be happy in the present."

"I am, I shall be happy," said Paul affectionately. "A man cannot be said to have the right to give up what he has never had the right to expect. And it never, please God, shall be said of me, that I ran the risk of bringing despair into any woman's life. Say that you think I am right, Dad."

There was pain restrained and kept under, working now within him, the pain of one who has made up his mind to a certain course of action, yet would fain receive a word of understanding and encouragement.

For a moment Godwin was silent : then he said in a low voice :

"Boy, boy : I cannot at least say that I think you are wrong."

*(To be continued.)*

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## Boatman Jack.

The boatman stands on the yellow sands,  
With his seventy years of life;  
And that's his boat that rides afloat,  
Called "Polly" after his wife.  
Tho' he's grey and old, and his years nigh told,  
He's the cheeriest tar I know;  
He'll sing galore as he plies his oar  
Of merry days long ago;  
And he'll carry ashore six lasses or more,  
Then he'll cry "Yeo ho!"

"A boat to-day, sir? Just step this way, sir,  
I'll row ye to sea and back;  
It's meself that's ready to row ye steady,  
And so says 'boatman Ja—ck,'  
And so says 'boatman Jack.'"

Sometimes he'll sigh, and folk ask him "Why  
Do you gaze above so oft?"  
"Ah!" sighs he, "My ould lass, she  
Has left me and gone aloft.  
In yonder skies, I see her eyes  
Smile down on me below,—  
A tear d'ye say? But nay, lass, nay,  
For I'll see her soon, I know."  
But he wipes his eyes where the salt spray lies  
As he sturdily cries "Yeo ho!"

"A boat to-day, sir? Just step this way, sir,  
I'll row ye to sea and back;  
It's meself that's ready to row ye steady,  
And so says 'boatman Ja—ck,'  
And so says 'boatman Jack.'"

## The Ideal House.

By JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

IN THE MATTER OF THE NURSERY.

IN due course it is more than likely that our Edwin and Angelina will have to consider the question of the nursery part of their ideal establishment.

In London houses it is very much the custom to put the nursery as far as possible from the hall door—a very great mistake. My advice to Angelina, especially with the first baby, is to have her nursery or nurseries as near as possible to her own bedroom. If Angelina is not an inordinately heavy woman, she should have her baby with her at night for certainly the first eighteen months of the young existence. It is a great strain for a nurse, no matter how experienced, to have the care of a child both day and night. The first three months a little baby sleeps during certainly fifteen or sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, but, as vaccination, teething, and other infantile troubles come on, the hours of sleep get more broken into and the tax upon the nurse increases with every day. I have in the course of my perigrinations heard of marvellous persons who are able to manage baby and nursery unaided, who wait on their ladies, and make every stitch the child wears, besides doing odds and ends of needlework for other departments of the house. I was greatly reproached the other day by an unmarried lady who soundly took me to task for the wilful mismanagement of my own baby, and the contrast that my nursery presented to other women's nurseries. I did not argue the point—it is never worth discussing any matter with an unskilled opinion. I kept mine just where it was.

In any case Angelina will be best advised to have her nursery within earshot of herself. A good nurse, and any Angelina is a fool who does not insist on having her nurse as good as possible, a good nurse, who has nothing to conceal, never objects to the close proximity of her charge's mother, while in cases of illness either in nurse or child, it is invaluable to have them close at hand. Next to the mistress's own bedroom, the baby should have the best and most cheerful room in the house. And, Angelina, don't, *don't* have

your little soul's living room covered with linoleum! Don't, don't! It may be economical, but it is cold, bare, cheerless and horrid. I know people who say that it is so nice and clean, that it can just be washed over after the baby is in bed. I knew once a woman who had her nursery just washed over *every* night after her small baby was in bed and asleep, and there the child used to stay with the damp rising up under and around it, and that mother wondered that the child was cross and fretful during the day!

I prefer a square of good Brussels carpet to any other for a nursery. The floor may be stained and waxed between the edge of the carpet and the skirting of the wall. Let the walls be light, the blinds dark, the windows protected by brass or iron rods safely fixed, and let the fire-place be protected in a similar manner. A hearthrug is not only not a necessity but a positive drawback. I would advise Angelina not to have a regular baby's chair. They are always cockleto, to use a homely phrase. And as baby gets older there is always a strong inclination to fix the little feet against the edge of the table and enjoy the perils of tilting, the results of which are usually most disastrous, and may even be fatal.

On the walls have plenty of gay pictures. All the gay coloured prints of which we have so many at Christmas-time can be put into cheap frames—say eighteen-pence each—and a little child will derive the greatest pleasure therefrom, and will soon learn the little stories which they convey.

There should be an accurate clock in every nursery, and either a wide straight sofa or a small bed. It is better for a little child who drops asleep during the day, to be laid down in a warm room with a soft light wrap thrown over it, than to be carried to a cold room where it may get a chill. Besides that, whether the nurse is busy or taking a rest, or indulging in half an hour's reading, it is best for her to do so with her baby within sight of her.

A *toile ciré* or very superior table oil-cloth is a fine thing for a nursery table. I do not know if these can be bought in England, but in France they are in use for almost every household. They are cheap, are easily kept clean, and are made to closely imitate damask.

If the nursery has not a large cupboard, Angelina should indulge in a large painted wardrobe, wherein all baby's toys can be kept. I don't consider that any good woman would keep a sewing-machine

in her child's room. I used to possess such a thing, but it was always kept in an adjacent bedroom.

A couple of capacious easy chairs are most necessary, and baby should have a black and rush-bottomed elbow chair in which to sit at table. A couple of fairly fine cushions will raise a small child to the height necessary for comfort.

It is a good plan to have a gas-ring or Beatrice stove on a table outside the nursery door. With this, food can be prepared to a nicety at any moment, without any feeling of obligation to the kitchen below.

As to the care of the nursery, let Angelina see that it is beautifully kept, but also that the child's life is not spoiled thereby. I mean that she should not let the nurse be too severe on the child, in the way of tidiness. It is not habitual for a little child to be tidy, any more than it is for it to be always clean. A child should be thoroughly washed every morning, and it should have its little hands washed before going to bed. During the day there should be off-times, when little pinafores may be real dirty, little hands and faces grubby and sticky. Don't, my good Angelina, after your baby has begun to crawl about and enjoy a blessed state of dirt, get into a habit of sending up for Baby to show it off to all and sundry who come to visit you. Remember that to Baby it means an irksome and loathly process of face and hand washing, and the changing of one garment at least; enough to bring any average baby down in a bad temper. Tell me, do you know anything more annoying than to have to abandon some delightful occupation, say cleaning your bicycle, or giving your palms and other green plants a much-needed soap and water bath, and to make a hurried toilette that you may appear civil to some wholly indifferent visitors whom you never saw before, and devoutly hope you may never see again? Don't forget that the baby is even less interested in visitors than even you are. Most babies loathe visitors, strange people with unaccustomed voices, with rude fingers which take a fiendish pleasure in prodding soft little ribs, women with hearsees on their heads and black window blinds over their faces, with great fur garments which render them fearful objects of terror to poor little souls who are used to nice homely nurses lilac printed frocks and nice white aprons, and "Muvver in a soft bright tea-gown, and perhaps a nice, clean-shaven "Dadda," in whose strong arms there is perfect safety.



Think what a little child, to whom all the world is new and strange, must feel when there bursts upon its horizon a strange, terrible creature, a cross between a hairy baboon and the inside of a horse-hair sofa! I am sure that it will be better for all the world, when persons require a formal introduction to small babies, and when it is considered a great liberty to kiss or touch a child under six years old. The present occupant of my nursery allows no liberties of this kind, and stands no nonsense from admiring strangers. She evidently believes that the child of twenty-two months old who hesitates is lost, for as soon as any hearse's heads, or other unaccustomed objects approach her, she puts out a widespread warning hand, and planting it firmly upon the part of the object meant to her, pushes with might and main, until the distance she considers desirable is attained.

How funny children are sometimes! A friend of mine had an only child, and the old nurse, who adored him, was quite the most grotesque human being I ever saw. One day I heard her say to her husband, in almost a vexed tone, "Old Lady Margaret came to-day, and Dicky simply wouldn't kiss her. She was so anxious he should; and I did my best, but he was as firm as a rock." "I don't wonder at it," said Dicky's father, "I wouldn't kiss Lady Margaret for any money." "But he kisses mamma," objected the mother. The husband was silent for a minute; then he burst out, "Well, mamma *is* a hideous old 'ooman," he said. "But hang me if I wouldn't rather kiss old 'oomans,' than Lady Margaret any day."

I have told the story before of the child who was sent for, to see some visitors. But I think it will bear telling again.

The visitor and the hostess were awaiting the arrival of Nurse and the children, when there came the sound of a scuffle at the drawing-room door. "I don't care," bawled an angry little voice, "tumpany or no tumpany, I won't have my face washed with spit."

I think the question of domestic pets may well be included in the matter of the nursery. It is a question of considerable niceness about which there are many mistaken opinions. Somehow we all think it a natural thing to see a nursery cat—and of course you remember Cuchie and the nursery cat in Ravenshoe! Well, of this Angelina may rest assured, that the nursery cat is a complete fraud. I have never known a cat brought up among children that was not ill-

tempered and vindictive. We have, at present, a thing in our establishment which is like a patchwork quilt for variety of breed, and I must say a more savage brute does not exist. She will come fawning and purring to one to be petted, and will then, without warning, lash out with her claws and bite like a fury. It has been the same with all our cats, and I believe the truth is that cats have soft ribs and suffer from over-loving more than dogs do. Dogs brought up with children are always affectionate and trustworthy; cats object to have their insides squeezed flat, and terms of endearment don't seem to soothe the internal agony at all. There is nothing like a dog for a nursery, but all other pets are a mistake. Birds get forgotten, guinea-pigs are stupid, rabbits smell and don't care for their little owners, doves may be tamed, but are very unlucky, and white rats and mice are disgusting. Depend on it, that a well-bred dog is the finest thing in the world for a child's pet, and after that a donkey or a pony.

As little folks grow older, each should have a bit of garden, and some sort of collection. Don't, dear Angelina, let them bicycle too early, don't let them go to evening parties too young, or to theatres till they can fully understand, don't begin lessons of any kind till they are seven years old at least. Keep them young, keep them happy; troubles will come soon enough—soon enough.

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## The Drama.

WITH the close of the season has also come the last representation of *David Garrick*, at the Criterion, but such an excellent melodrama which has commanded wide popular favour, will, no doubt before long, be revived. Mr. Charles Wyndham as David Garrick—the despised play-actor—played the part of the hero to perfection, and, although Act III was of a very harassing nature, and called forth considerable emotion on the part of the audience, they left in a happy frame of mind, as the closing scene brought the tragedy to a satisfactory conclusion.

Miss Mary Moore (who also enacted a similar rôle with Mr. Charles Wyndham in *The Physician*, previous to the performance of *David Garrick*) appeared to much better advantage as Ada Ingot, in *David Garrick*, than Edana Hinde in the former play. Indeed, she had quite lost the somewhat stagey manner that was noticeable in Edana Hinde, and as Ada Ingot won the sympathy of the whole house.

Mr. William Farren ably supported *David Garrick* as the stern but devoted father of the heroine; and all the minor parts were carried out with happy effect.

The *Yashmak* at the Shaftesbury commends itself to those who prefer the gay to the grave, and Mr. George Humphrey, as Mr. Hobb's friend, never failed to elicit laughter whenever his melancholy visage appeared.

This musical play is a story of the East, and we have a peep into an oriental harem, and some good stage effects. The project conceived by Bustapha Pasha, the Sultan's factotum, to carry off two European ladies from the hotel where they are staying, naturally leads to some exciting scenes.

Another musical play, at the Opera Comique—*The Maid of Athens*—must not be overlooked by those who appreciate real comedy. To say that the play is excellent only conveys a feeble idea of the farcical success of the piece. From first to last the audience are fairly carried away by the comedy, and *The Maid of Athens* scored a triumph.

M. W.